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BIOGRAPHICAL AND CRITICAL ESSAYS.

THIRD SERIES.

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BIOGRAPHICAL AND CRITICAL

ESSAYS.

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THIRD SERIES.

BY A. HAYWARD, ESQ., Q.C.

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ADVERTISEMENT.

For the information of readers who may have read these Essays as they originally appeared in the shape of Articles, the writer begs leave to state that large additions (to the amount of nearly a third as they stand) have been made to three: the first, the third, and the fifth.

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ESSAYS.

THE BRITISH PARLIAMENT: ITS HISTORY AND ELOQUENCE.

A Book of Parliamentary Anecdote, Compiled from Authentic Sources. By G. H. JENNINGS and W. S. JOHNSTONE. London, Paris, and New York: 1872.

THERE is a comic History of England. Why might there not be an anecdotical one, in which the salient points should be placed in broad relief by memorable sayings and striking incidents—by well-chosen traits of valour, virtue, patriotism, eloquence, and wit? There is no pleasanter mode of conveying knowledge, no surer mode of durably impressing it. The most fugitive attention is caught by anecdotes: the most volatile mind retains them so long as it retains anything; and none but the shallowest will miss the moral they point, the reflections they suggest, or the conclusions they justify.

The compilers of 'A Book of Parliamentary Anecdote' have manifested no extraordinary amount of discrimination or research. Their materials are drawn from familiar and easily accessible sources: their arrangement is open to grave objection; yet their main object, as explained in their Preface, has been attained. They have produced an amusing, useful, and interesting work; nor is it well possible for any thoughtful reader, at all given to political speculation, to skim

their pages without picturing to himself the various stages by which the British Parliament has reached its proud pre-eminence amongst the legislative assemblies of both hemispheres—without evoking scene after scene, or crisis upon crisis, in which its independent existence was rudely threatened by high-handed prerogative from without, or its character, as an instrument of freedom and civilisation, sadly compromised by faction or corruption from within.

When Madame de Stäel was expatiating to the Emperor Alexander on the good fortune of Russia in possessing such a ruler, he replied, 'Alas, Madame, I am nothing but a happy accident.' Can the British Parliament, looking either to its origin, its constitution, or its growth, be honestly described as anything else? Where are the marks of contrivance or design, of unity of plan, of calculated harmony of parts? Which of the three branches of the Legislature at its creation or inception held, or was intended to hold, the same relative rank which it holds now? Mr. Butler relates in his 'Reminiscences,' that Moreton, Chief Justice of Chester, happened to say in the House, 'King, Lords, and Commons, or (looking at the first Pitt) as that right honourable member would term them, Commons, Lords, and King.' Pitt called him to order, and desired the words to be taken down. They were written down by the clerk. 'Bring them to me,' said Pitt, in his loftiest tone. By this time Moreton was frightened out of his senses. 'Sir,' he stammered out, addressing the Speaker, 'I am sorry to have given any offence to the right honourable member or to the House. I meant nothing. King, Lords, and Commons—Lords, King, and Commons—Commons, Lords, and King: *tria juncta in uno.* I meant nothing; indeed, I meant nothing.' Pitt rose: 'I don't wish to push the matter further. The moment a man acknowledges his error, he ceases to be guilty. I have a great regard for the

honourable member, and as an instance of that regard, I give him this advice: whenever he *means* nothing I recommend him to *say* nothing.'

This incident is related in illustration of Pitt's ascendency, which must have been absolutely overwhelming if he could bully an eminent lawyer into a craven apology for words which, by no great latitude of interpretation, might be proved historically true. Again and again has the order of precedence been practically reversed. The very shifting of places which he blurted out in his confusion has occurred. It was Lords, King, and Commons frequently, if not normally, under the Plantagenets: King, Lords, and Commons, under the Tudors: Commons, Lords, and King, during the Great Rebellion. Where the varying arrangement fails is in not conveying an accurate impression of the contrast presented by the Commons as they started and as they stand. The obscure and unhonoured state from which they emerged recalls 'the dirt and seaweed whence proud Venice rose.' The burgesses were summoned solely to vote subsidies. The right of representation was regarded as an oppressive burthen from which the smaller boroughs frequently petitioned to be freed. The Commons dared not initiate any measure of legislation: too happy to procure the redress of their grievances by tacking a humble prayer or a halting hesitating condition to a money bill. They prostrated themselves like slaves before the Crown. They crouched like menials, and bent uncovered, like vassals owing suit and service, before the Lords. They received wages from their constituents: like other paid agents, they were bound to abide by their instructions; and it would have puzzled Burke to confirm the proposition by authority when he told the electors of Bristol that a member of the British Parliament was not a delegate.

All readers of Hume will remember the story of

Henry VIII. sending for Edward Montague, a member who was supposed to have considerable influence, and thus apostrophising him: 'Ha! man! will they not suffer my bill to pass?' and laying his hand on Montague's head, then on his knees, 'Get my bill passed by to-morrow, or else to-morrow this head of yours shall be off.' The bill was passed on the morrow. To complete the humiliation of the Commons, the Cardinal Minister treated them with no more respect than his master.

> 'In full-blown dignity see Wolsey stand,
> Law in his voice and fortune in his hand.'

It was in this plenitude of pride and power in which the satirist has painted him, that Wolsey, fearing lest a subsidy of extraordinary amount (800,000*l.*) might not pass smoothly, announced his intention to be present when it was brought forward. He came in state, and delivered a solemn oration, setting forth that less than the sum demanded would not answer the Prince's occasions; and then looked round for a reply. 'Getting none, he required answer of Mr. Speaker (Sir Thomas More), who first reverently on his knees, excusing the silence of the House, abashed at the presence of so noble a personage, able to amaze the wisest and best learned in a realm, and then, by many probable arguments, proving that for them to make answer was neither expedient nor agreeable with the ancient liberty of the House; in conclusion for himself showed that though they had all with their voices trusted him, yet except every one of them could put into his own head their several wits, he alone in so weighty a matter was unmeet to make his Grace answer.'[1]

The Cardinal, angry and mystified, as he well might be, suddenly arose and departed. The next time More waited on him at Whitehall, he said: 'I wish to God, Mr. More, you had been at Rome when I made you

[1] Roper's 'Life of Sir Thomas More.'

Speaker.' 'Your Grace not offended, so would I too, my Lord,' replied Sir Thomas, 'for then should I have seen the place I long have desired to visit.' The subserviency of the Third Estate is rendered more glaring by the means which More's ready wit suggested for extricating them from the dilemma.

Queen Elizabeth expressly prohibited Parliament from meddling with State matters or ecclesiastical causes, and she sent members to prison who dared to transgress her imperial edict in these particulars. When James commanded a conference between the House of Commons and the Judges he commanded it (to use his own words) 'as an absolute king,' from whom all their privileges had been derived. He stuck to this pretension, which was rather evaded than contested; never called together his faithful Commons except when he wanted money; and never met them without quarrelling with them. Yet his sense of their growing importance was betrayed by his pettish exclamation when the deputation of twelve waited on him, in 1620, at Newmarket, to present the declaration against monopolies: 'Chairs! chairs! here be twal kynges comin.' And again, by his apostrophe to the restive horse: 'The de'il i my saul, sirrah, an you be not quiet, I'se send you to the five hundred kings in the House of Commons; they'll quickly tame you.' When the Prince (Charles I.) and Buckingham were promoting the impeachment of the Earl of Middlesex, the canny old King told his son that 'he would live to have his bellyfull of Parliamentary impeachments.' The altered position of the Commons, however, appears to have been imperfectly understood until they had practically become paramount; and the ill-advised attempt to seize the five members shows how slow Charles and his counsellors were to recognise the fact that the real sovereignty of England had departed from the Crown.

During the Reform Bill agitation of 1831, an

enthusiastically loyal orator[1] at Nottingham called on the lieges to rally round their sovereign 'like the barons at Runnymede.' This style of rallying was discontinued after the wars of the Roses, which made sad havoc amongst the peerage. Only twenty-nine temporal peers were summoned to the first Parliament of Henry VII. They numbered 59 at the death of Elizabeth, 139 the year after the Restoration, 168 at the death of Queen Anne, exclusive of the 16 representative peers of Scotland, 174 at the accession of George III. In the first ten years of his reign forty-two peers were created, or raised to a higher order in the peerage. Lord North created or promoted about thirty. In 1801, when Mr. Pitt temporarily left office, he had created or promoted 140 British peers.[2] The House of Lords now consists of nearly five hundred members, including the episcopal bench and the representative peers; yet the augmentation has hardly kept pace with the increase of wealth and population.

The silken barons, who replaced the iron barons, were most of them the creatures of the Crown, and the House of Lords could hardly be said to possess an independent existence or will of its own till after the Great Rebellion. When it began to play a leading part in government and legislation, its leaning towards the Crown was influenced by the frequent attendance of the King at its sittings. Charles the Second used to say they were as good as a comedy.

In describing the debate (November 20, 1680) on the Bill for dissolving his Majesty's marriage with

[1] The late Nathaniel Goldsmid, an Oxonian and barrister of some note in his time, much esteemed by his friends. He was also reported to have declaimed against the heroes of the July Revolution as 'a set of cowardly fellows, who, instead of standing manfully in front of their barricades, slink behind them.' But this flight has likewise been attributed to a more distinguished person who still adorns the legislature.

[2] 'Treatise upon the Law, Privileges, Proceedings, and Usage of Parliament.' By Sir T. Erskine May, K.C.B.

Catharine of Portugal, on the ground of her barrenness, Barillon writes: 'One of the peers represented that the remedy of divorce was very uncertain, it not being sure that the King would have children by another wife. Upon this Shaftesbury rose, and pointing to the King, *who is almost always by the fireplace*, said: "Can it be doubted from the King's mien that he is in a condition to have children? He is not more than fifty. I know people who are more than sixty and do not despair of progeny." All the House burst out laughing, and the King laughed with the rest.' There is a French maxim old enough to have been in Shaftesbury's mind—'That a man marrying at seventy has a fair chance of progeny, and marrying at eighty is quite sure.'

Charles was standing by the fire during a debate on the Declaration of Indulgence, when the Duke of York whispered to him: 'What a rogue you have for a Lord Chancellor.' And the King replied: 'Codsfish, what a fool you have for a Lord Treasurer.' The Lord Chancellor was Shaftesbury, and the Lord Treasurer Clifford.

The first day Shaftesbury presided as Lord Chancellor, he gave occasion to a scene by telling the Duke of York, who had taken his seat on the right hand of the throne, that his proper place, as only heir presumptive, was on the left. The Duke submitted with an exceedingly bad grace, exclaiming: 'My Lord, you are a rascal and a villain.' To which Shaftesbury calmly replied: 'I am much obliged to your royal highness for not calling me likewise a coward and a papist.' A curious scene in the Lords is recorded by Pepys as occurring in 1667:

'Thence I up to the Lords' House to enquire for my Lord Bellasis, and there hear how at a conference this morning between the two Houses, my Lord Buckingham leaning rudely over my Lord Marquis Dorchester, my Lord Dor-

chester removed his elbow. Duke of Buckingham asked him whether he was uneasy. Dorchester replied, "Yes; and that he durst not do this were he anywhere else." Buckingham replied, "Yes, he would, and that he was a better man than himself." Dorchester said that he lyed. With this Buckingham struck off his hat, and took him by his periwigg, and pulled it aside, and held him. My Lord Chamberlain and others interposed, and upon coming into the House, the Lords did order them both to the Tower, whither they are to go this afternoon. . . . This day's work will bring the Lieutenant of the Tower 350*l.*'

The royal practice of attending the sittings of the Lords is thus described by Burnet, writing of 1669:

'To prevent all trouble from the Lords, the King was advised to go and be present at all their debates. Lord Lauderdale valued himself to me on this advice, which he said he gave. At first the King sat decently on the throne, though even this was a great restraint on the freedom of debate; which had some effect for awhile. Though afterwards many of the Lords seemed to speak with more boldness, because they said one heard it to whom they had no other access but in that place, and they took the more liberty because what they said could not be reported wrong. The King, who was often weary of time, and did not know how to get round the day, liked the going to the House as a pleasant diversion. So he went constantly, and he quickly left the throne and stood by the fire, which drew a crowd about him, that broke all the decency of that House. *For before that time every Lord sat regularly in his place*, but the King's coming broke the order of their sittings, as became senators.

'The King's going thither had a much worse effect. Thus he became a common solicitor, not only in public affairs, but even in private matters of justice. He would in a little time have gone round the House and spoken to every man that he thought worth speaking to, *and he was apt to do that upon the solicitation of any of the Ladies in favour*, or of any that had credit.'

It would appear that when their Lordships were sit-

ting in their judicial capacity, they were exposed to a species of direct influence not less dangerous than that of the Crown. In the debate of October 20, 1675, Lord Shaftesbury said :—

'Pray, my Lords, forgive me if on this occasion I put you in mind of committee dinners, and the scandal of it—those ladies that attended all causes. *It was come to that pass that men even hired or borrowed of their friends handsome sisters or daughters to deliver their petitions.* But for all this, I must say that your judgments have been sacred, unless in one or two causes, and those we owe most to that bench (the episcopal) from whom we now apprehend the most danger.'

We learn from the 'Parliamentary Debates' that on Friday, January 12, 1711, 'the House of Lords having adjourned, to give time for the presentation of an address, resumed as soon as the Queen (who designed to hear the debate *incognito*) was come to the House.' Meagre as is the report of the ensuing debate, it was obviously a spirited and highly interesting one, in which Lord Somers, Lord Cowper, Lord Halifax, Lord Nottingham, the Duke of Argyll, the Duke of Leeds, Lord Godolphin, the Duke of Marlborough, and Lord Peterborough took part. Much of it turned on the distinction between 'Ministry' and 'Cabinet Council,' terms then confessedly ambiguous. The Duke of Argyll said: 'He thought all Ministers were of the Cabinet Council, but that all the Cabinet Council were not Ministers.' Lord Peterborough argued that 'the word "Cabinet Council" was indeed too copious, for they disposed of all: they fingered the money: they meddled with the war: they meddled with things they did not understand: so that sometimes there was no "Minister" in the Cabinet Council.'

'Few things in our history,' says Macaulay, 'are more curious than the origin and growth of the power now possessed by the Cabinet. During many years

old-fashioned politicians continued to regard the Cabinet as an unconstitutional and dangerous Board. Nevertheless, it constantly became more and more important. It at length drew to itself the chief executive power, and has now been regarded during several generations as an essential part of our polity. Yet, strange to say, it still continues to be altogether unknown to the law!'[1] Stranger still, neither Macaulay nor any one else has been able to specify the period when the Cabinet was first nominated by the Prime Minister or constituted as now. William III. was his own prime minister. The sudden and critical appearance of the Dukes of Argyll and Somerset in Queen Anne's last Council, when they were thanked by the Lord Treasurer (Shrewsbury) for coming uninvited, is well known. They came as Privy Councillors. No Prime Minister was formally nominated at the accession of George I. A new Privy Council (consisting only of 33 members) was formed, of which Lord Nottingham was declared president; and the chief conduct of affairs was left to a cabinet council or junto, composed of the Duke of Marlborough, the Earls of Nottingham and Sunderland, the Lords Halifax, Townshend, and Somers, and General Stanhope. Walpole, who was to lead the House of Commons, and who gradually became the most influential member of the administration, was not even a member of this junto.

Smollett, in his opening chapter on the reign of George II., distinctly states 'that the supreme direction of affairs was not yet engrossed by a single Minister.' Lord Townshend had the principal control (subject to royal interference) of foreign affairs, whilst Walpole was paramount at home. It was by personal influence rather than by official right as Premier, that Walpole obtained the monopoly of power, which he consolidated by a well-organised system of corruption. Henry

[1] 'History,' c. ii.

Fox, the first Lord Holland (already a Privy Councillor) was made a member of the Cabinet in 1754, by the King, as a mark of private favour, on condition that he was 'not to interfere with, or derogate from, the priority of the Secretary of State in the House of Commons.'[1]

Although the first Pitt was the guiding spirit of the administration during one of the most glorious periods of our annals, the Duke of Newcastle was First Lord of the Treasury, with the uncontrolled distribution of the patronage. In 1765, however, Pitt, on being invited to form a Ministry, refused to undertake the duty without *carte blanche*, which was conceded to him in 1766; and this appears to be the first instance in which such a concession was enforced. But he proceeded to form a Government much as the Duke of Cumberland (who had just before formed the Rockingham Government) may have done. He named the constituent parts including the First Lord of the Treasury, and (having become Lord Chatham) reserved merely the Presidency of the Council for himself. Nor did he make any sustained attempt to guide the counsels of the Cabinet thus constructed, the heterogeneous composition of which has been rendered memorable by Burke.[2] It is remarkable that the great commoner, in the height of his well-earned popularity, besides putting up with more than one personal slight, allowed a congenial colleague (Legge) to be ousted, and a most uncongenial one (Lord Bute)

[1] The entire Correspondence is printed in '*Holland House*;' by Princess Marie Lichtenstein, vol. i. pp. 47-49.

[2] 'He made an administration so chequered and speckled: he put together a piece of joinery so crossly indented and whimsically dovetailed: a cabinet so variously inlaid: such a piece of diversified mosaic: such a tesselated pavement without cement; here a bit of black stone and there a bit of white; patriots and courtiers: king's friends and republicans: whigs and tories: treacherous friends and open enemies: that it was indeed a very curious show, but utterly unsafe to touch, and unsure to stand upon.'—(*Burke*).

to be forced upon him; yet when he resigned (Oct. 1761) rather than be responsible for a policy which he was no longer allowed to guide, he is censured as guilty of an undue and extraordinary assumption of superiority.[1]

Till some years after the accession of George III. a member of the Government was frequently found voting against his chief. It was a surprise to Charles Fox when he was suddenly dismissed for an act of ministerial insubordination by Lord North; and Thurlow made no secret of his disappointment when he found that he, the Lord Chancellor, could not beard Pitt, the Premier, with impunity. 'Stick to Pitt,' was his advice to Scott (Lord Eldon). 'He has tripped up my heels; and I would have tripped up *his* if I could. I confess I did not think the King would have parted with me so easily.' This was in 1792. Ministerial discipline has been tolerably well observed since.

The conflicts between the two Houses, with their comparative weight and influence at different epochs, are replete with dramatic situations and details. Take, for example, the conflict in 1700, when the Commons brought in a Bill for annulling the royal grants of forfeited property, and sought to force it intact through the Lords by coupling it with a money Bill. The Lords passed amendments: the Commons rejected them: the Lords passed them a second time, and a second time received the Bill back again with a threatening intimation that it must pass. 'The House

[1] 'He (Pitt) and Lord Temple have declared against the whole Cabinet Council. Why, that they have done so before now, and yet have acted with them again, it is very true; but a little word has reached Mr. Pitt, which never entered into his former declaration; nay, nor into Cromwell's, nor Hugh Capet's, nor Julius Cæsar's; nor any reformer's of modern or ancient times. He has happened to say he will *guide*. Now, though this Cabinet Council are mighty willing to be guided when they cannot help it, yet they wish to have appearances saved: they cannot be fond of being told that they are to be guided, still less that other people should be told so.'—(*Horace Walpole.*)

of Commons (says Macaulay) broke up with gloomy looks and in great agitation. All London looked forward to the next day with painful forebodings. The general feeling was in favour of the Bill. It was rumoured that the majority which had determined to stand by the amendments, had been swollen by several prelates, by several of the illegitimate sons of Charles II., and by several needy and greedy courtiers. The cry in all the public places of resort was that the nation would be ruined by the three B.'s—Bishops, Bastards, and Beggars.'

In every conflict of this kind the final appeal must be to the people, and the boldest champions of the peerage felt that they had no alternative but to give way. It is worthy of remark that the hero of Blenheim then acted the part so frequently acted in our time by the hero of Waterloo. The Duke of Marlborough counselled concession as the least of two evils. Better pass a bad Bill than provoke another revolution or civil war. This is substantially the same argument by which the Duke of Wellington persuaded the Lords to pass the Reform Bill, the same by which he satisfied himself that he was bound to carry Catholic Emancipation and support the Bill for the abolition of the Corn Laws. According to Lord Russell, he told a Protectionist Peer, who expressed a bad opinion of it: 'Bad opinion of the Bill, my Lord! You can't have a worse opinion of it than I have, but it was recommended from the throne; it was passed by the Commons by a large majority, and we must all vote for it. The Queen's Government must be supported.'

Has not this (the great Duke's favourite) doctrine been carried much too far? The Queen's Government —meaning government as involving law and order— must be supported; but not any particular government or ministry, nor any particular policy in which their official existence may be wrapped up. Sound, well-

considered legislation is an impossibility, if all honest judgment is to be waived in deference to a so-called public opinion, which we are to take on trust, forgetting that it is we ourselves who, by falling in with it whilst we dissent from it, give it weight. Let no man, either Peer or Commoner, support or vote for what he deems a bad Bill or measure. We shall then, at all events, be able to ascertain what is the real state of public opinion: we shall then have something firm and trustworthy to proceed upon, and the Constitution will work better than if, whenever the political horizon is troubled or clouded, we are content to sacrifice our convictions to expediency.

By a strange perversity of fortune, the Duke of Wellington was the unconscious instrument of accelerating that increase of popular power which has proved so detrimental to the legitimate influence of the hereditary assembly. 'When at the meeting of Parliament, November 3, 1830, the Duke of Wellington declared that the constitution of the House of Commons was perfect, and that the wit of man could not *à priori* have devised anything so good, the general feeling was one of dismay. The House of Lords, usually so calm, showed signs of amazement and perturbation. The Duke whispered to one of his colleagues, "What can I have said which seems to make so great a disturbance?" "You have announced the fall of your Government, that is all," replied his more clear-sighted colleague.'[1]

The Duke had taken his line deliberately before this Parliament met, and knew very well what he was saying. Moreover, it was the discontented Tories (who agreed with him about the constitution of the House of Commons) that turned the scale. But the demand

[1] 'Earl Russell—Introduction to Speeches.' The Duke lost a capital opportunity when he insisted on giving the forfeited franchise to East Retford. In the division on the Civil List (November, 1830), which caused his resignation, thirty Tories, headed by Mr. Bankes and Sir Charles Wetheral, voted in the majority.

for parliamentary reform, like a pent-up current, had acquired depth and volume through his dogged resistance, and the resulting measure of 1832 destroyed that balance of power between the two branches of the Legislature which so largely contributed to their harmonious action and joint efficiency. It did so by severing the strongest of the connecting links between the two Houses, and by enabling the House of Commons to speak in the name of the people, which prior to 1832 would have been an idle pretension.

A list has been given in 'Notes and Queries' of fifty members in 1869, who, so far as could be ascertained, were the direct lineal descendants of those who sat for the same places respectively in the Long Parliament. Lord Stanhope, after enumerating thirty-five instances, remarks: 'These hereditary seats, combining in some degree the permanence of peerage with the popularity of elections—these bulwarks against any sudden and overwhelming tide of popular delusion—appear to me to have been one of the main causes of the good working of our ancient constitution, and still more of its long duration.' He also expatiates with well-founded enthusiasm on the number of eminent statesmen who owed to the smaller boroughs, now disfranchised, either their introduction into public life or their refuge during some part of it.[1] But the essential element of a popular assembly was proportionally diminished, and it was no Radical reformer of our day, but Mr. Pitt, speaking in 1783, who said: 'This House is not the representative of the people of Great Britain; it is the representative of nominal boroughs, of ruined and exterminated towns, of noble families, of wealthy individuals, of foreign potentates.'

He stated that one of these foreign potentates, the Nabob of Arcot, had eight nominees in the House. A well-known story authenticates the fact of a noble

[1] 'History of England from the Peace of Utrecht,' &c., vol. i. chap. i.

family having seven: a Whig Earl had as many when (in 1830) he patriotically bartered his boroughs for a marquisate, to be followed by a dukedom.[1] The counties, says Mr. Massey, were in the hands of the great landowners, who mostly settled the representation by previous concert. When they could not agree, or when there was a rivalry between two great families, the contest, which in former ages would have been decided in the field, was fought at the hustings; and at least as many ancient houses have been ruined in modern times by these conflicts as were formerly destroyed by private war. He adds that the great feud between the houses of Lascelles and Wentworth, when they disputed the county of York for fourteen days, cost one hundred thousand pounds.[2] It cost more than treble that sum. Wellesley Pole spent eighty thousand pounds in contesting Wilts, of which four thousand pounds went in ribbons.

Unfortunately, the inherent corruption or perversity of poor human nature is such, that it has proved as difficult to convince the people at large of the wickedness of selling votes as of killing a pheasant or a hare. In some of the largest constituencies (Liverpool, for one), at the last general election, independent electors might have been bought by the hundred at five shillings a head. In one of his powerful speeches against Parliamentary Reform, Mr. Lowe, after reading a list of sums allowed as legitimate expenses (ranging from eight thousand pounds up to twenty-seven thousand), said: 'Now, I ask the House how it is possible that the institutions of this country can endure, if this kind of thing is to go on and increase?'

Let us hope that it may be checked, if not stopped,

[1] 'The Duke of Norfolk had eleven members; Lord Lonsdale nine; Lord Darlington seven; the Duke of Rutland, the Marquis of Buckingham, and Lord Carrington six each.'—*May*. Three of these numbers include county members.

[2] 'History of England during the Reign of George III.,' vol. i. chap. 9.

by the ballot, and die out, like another kind of thing which grew out of it. When, towards the commencement of the last century, Henley, member for Southampton, was called to account by his constituents for voting against their interests for the promotion of his own, he replied, 'I bought you, and, by G—d, I will sell you.' This was the practice, if not the language, of his time. Bribery was reduced to a system soon after the Restoration, and even the 'great and good' King William did not venture to depart from it. Speaking of Sir John Trevor, Speaker and First Commissioner of the Great Seal in 1690, Burnet says: 'Being a Tory in principle, he undertook to manage that party, provided he was furnished with such sums of money as might purchase some votes: and by him began the practice of buying off men, in which hitherto the King had kept to stricter rules. I took the liberty once to complain to the King of this method. He said he hated it as much as any man could do; but he saw it was not possible, considering the corruption of the age, to avoid it, unless he would endanger the whole.'

Trevor was afterwards expelled for receiving as well as giving bribes. Mr. Massey has found no trace of the practice after the Grenville administration. Up to that period, he says, money was received and expected by members from the Minister whose measure they supported, apparently without any consciousness of infamy, very much in the same manner as the voters in certain boroughs received head-money from the candidate as a matter of right and custom. There is a letter in the Grenville Correspondence showing that the practice extended to the Peers:

'London, November 26, 1763.

'Honoured Sir,—I am very much obliged to you for that freedom of converse you this morning indulged me in, which I prize more than the lucrative advantage I then received. To show the sincerity of my words (pardon, sir, the, perhaps,

over-niceness of my disposition) I return endorsed the bill for 300*l.* you favoured me with, *as good manners would not permit my refusal of it, when tendered by you.*

'Your most obliged and most obedient servant,

'SAY AND SELE.

'As a free horse wants no spur, so I stand in need of no inducement or douceur to lend my small assistance to the King or his friends in the present administration.'

Fancy the state of morals when good manners would not permit the direct oral refusal of a bribe. A parallel story is told by Dr. King. Sir Robert Walpole, meeting a member of the opposition in the Court of Requests, took him aside and offered him a bank bill of 2000*l.*, which he put into his hands, for his vote. The member replied: 'Sir Robert, you have lately served some of my particular friends; and when my wife was last at Court, the King was very gracious to her, which must have happened at your instance. I should therefore think myself very ungrateful (putting the bank-note into his pocket) if I were to refuse the favour you are now pleased to ask me.' The difference in amount may possibly account for the difference of conduct in the Commoner and the Peer.

The dispute between the Duke of Newcastle and Fox touching the disposition of the secret-service money strikingly illustrates the venality of the House of Commons in 1754. 'My brother,' said the Duke, 'when he was at the Treasury, never told anybody what he did with the secret-service money. No more will I.' Fox, who was differently situated from Pelham, replied: 'But how can I lead in the Commons without information on this head? How can I talk to gentlemen when I do not know which of them have received gratifications and which have not? And who is to have the disposal of places?' 'I myself,' said his Grace. 'How then am I to manage the House of Commons?' 'Oh, let the members of the House of

Commons come to me.' Well may the historian call this conversation one of the most curious in English history. The Duke had precedent in his favour, for early in the preceding reign, Craggs had led the House of Commons (if it could be called leading) as the docile agent of Sunderland, and was called Sunderland's man.

The settled price for a vote in approval of the peace in 1763 was 200*l.*, and it is stated on good authority that not less than 20,000*l.* was paid to members on a single morning for their votes.

The latest of these pecuniary bargains (those which come nearest to our time) were no longer conducted by the leader. They fell within the province of the patronage Secretary of the Treasury or 'whip;' and although the boldest would now hardly risk the offer of a bank-note, it would be a hypocritical affectation of purity to assert that modern legislators are no longer open to a bribe.[1] The Secretary of the Treasury in Lord Grey's administration used to boast that he had promised between 250 and 300 peerages, or promotions in the peerage, besides baronetcies, to ensure the passing of the Reform Bill; and it is related to the credit of a successor, that, on a discontented supporter objecting to the ministerial policy in his hearing, he took him aside and bluntly asked, 'What do you want?'

Next to Lord Castlereagh, the person who was most instrumental in bringing undue influence to bear upon the last Irish Parliament, was the Under-Secretary and whip, Cooke; who was thus apostrophised by Flood as he crossed the House on one of his secret missions whilst the orator was on his legs:

'What is it that I see? Shall the temple of Freedom be still haunted by the foul fiend of bribery and corruption?

[1] The late Charles Buller used to say that the votes of O'Connell's original 'tail' might have been had for ten pounds a vote, or two hundred pounds the session, *provided the money was laid before them in gold.*

I see personified before me an incarnation of that evil principle which lives by the destruction of public virtue.

On Fox's refusal to submit to the Duke of Newcastle's terms in 1754, his Grace conferred the leadership on Sir Thomas Robinson, the Keeper of the Great Wardrobe, whose qualifications may be guessed from the remark of Pitt on hearing of the nomination: 'Sir Thomas Robinson lead us! The Duke might as well send his jack-boot to lead us.' Nothing more strongly illustrates the altered position and character of the House than the immeasurably enhanced importance of the leadership. The conversation at 'The Grove' (Lord Clarendon's) happening to turn on a probable change of Ministry, 'Don't trouble yourself about the Prime Minister,' exclaimed the late Sir George Cornewall Lewis; 'you may always find one amongst the Peers: tell me who is to lead the House of Commons.' Tell us who is to lead on either side in the contingency of Mr. Gladstone and Mr. Disraeli being superseded or displaced? There arose no such difficulty in 1754. Thanks to the ducal distribution of the secret-service money and the patronage, the equivalent to the jack-boot got smoothly through a session, and was prepared to try another, when a European war compelled the avowal of his helplessness. A fresh negotiation was opened with Fox, and ended in the junction made famous by the comparison to the junction of the Rhone and the Saone. 'At Lyons,' said Pitt, 'I was taken to see the place where the two rivers meet: the one gentle, feeble, languid and, though languid, yet of no depth; the other a boisterous and impetuous torrent; but different as they are, they meet at last.'

From the accession of the House of Hanover till within living memory, the two Houses hardly ever differed about public matters, because they had the same objects in view and were subject to the same influences. The course taken by the House of Lords

in 1783, when they threw out the India Bill, can hardly be considered an exception, for this was done by the express desire of the King; and the House of Commons which had passed the Bill was immediately dissolved and replaced by one that agreed with his Majesty. But these august assemblies sometimes quarrelled about minor matters, and on one occasion they proceeded to such extremities in the interchange of rude and coarse language, as to make it a subject of general congratulation that their proceedings were then conducted with closed doors. The scene on December 10, 1770, when the Commons were turned out of the House of Lords with the rest of the 'strangers,' was thus described by Colonel Barré:

'I also was a witness of the scene; and never shall I forget it. I was listening to a noble duke, who was speaking upon the important subject of Gibraltar and Minorca. I am not aware that he was in possession of any secret. If he was, he certainly did not disclose it. Suddenly the whole scene became changed. I could not suppose that a single peer remained in the House. It seemed as if the mob had broke in: and they certainly acted in a very extraordinary manner. One of the heads of this mob—for there were two—was a Scotchman. I heard him call out several times, "Clear the Hoose! Clear the Hoose!" The face of the other was hardly human; *for he had contrived to put on a nose of an enormous size, that disfigured him completely, and his eyes started out of his head in so frightful a way*, that he seemed to be undergoing the operation of being strangled. It was altogether the most violent mob I ever beheld. You would imagine that these leaders would have continued so throughout. But no! at the latter end of the day, these two men took their places as door-keepers, and executed the office with as much exactness, as if it had been a well-regulated assembly.'

Sir Gilbert Elliott replied:—

'Personal allusions, though occasionally met with in books, are not frequent in the debates of this House. In the "Spec-

tator" we have an account of a club, to which the length of a man's nose gave him a claim to admittance; and a whole volume of "Tristram Shandy" is devoted to the same distorted feature. *The noses of the two lords alluded to certainly happen to be remarkably prominent.*'

The two lords were the Earls of Marchmont and Denbigh. The Commons immediately retaliated; and it so happened that the only peers below the bar on this first resort to reprisals, were those who had vainly resisted the exclusion of the Commons from the Upper House.

Two years afterwards, in 1772, Burke complained to the House that he had been kept three hours waiting at the door of the Lords with a Bill sent up from the Commons. The Commons were so indignant that, the next time a Bill was brought down from the Lords, it was rejected by a unanimous vote. The Speaker then tossed it across the table on the floor, and a number of members rushed forward and kicked it out of the House.

The constitutional mode of dealing with a refractory House of Commons is by dissolution. When the House of Lords asserts its independence, the only mode of compelling its co-operation with the other branches of the Legislature is by the creation of new peers; as in 1712, when Oxford and Bolingbroke gazetted twelve in one day. On their taking their seats, Wharton inquired if they were to vote like a jury by their foreman; and Bolingbroke, on hearing that the question had been carried by a majority of one, exclaimed: 'If those twelve had not been enough, we would have given them another dozen.'

This is the solitary instance of a creation in mass to carry a measure: the purpose has been commonly effected by a threat, which has gradually become nugatory and impracticable; the Conservative majority in the Upper House being now roughly estimated at

more than seventy. The only available mode, in the contingency of a decided split between the two Houses, would be an appeal to the country by a dissolution upon an implied understanding that the Lords would be guided by the result. As regards votes of censure, a vote by the Upper House might be neutralised by the vote of the Lower. This was done in the Pacifico affair; and might be done again; as plainly intimated by the Duke of Argyll and the Lord Chancellor (Lord Hatherley) in the debate on the appointment of Sir Robert Collier. 'This (said the Lord Chancellor) is as clearly a party manœuvre as ever came before Parliament.' . . . 'But, my lords, I tell you plainly, I will hold my ground. I will not quail till my profession tell me I ought, or, at all events, till the House of Commons shall censure me for what I have done.' More than one embarrassing collision has been averted by the graceful and judicious leadership of Lord Granville.

The true cause of the declining authority of the hereditary assembly is the increasing importance and authority of the Commons. It cannot be attributed to any falling off in personal qualifications, in dignity, patriotism, or ability. 'When (says Lord Russell) a great question arises which requires a display of more than ordinary knowledge of history, more accurate learning, more constitutional lore, and more practical wisdom than is to be found in the usual debates of Parliament, I know not where

> "the general debate,
> The popular harangue, the tart reply,
> The logic and the wisdom and the wit,"

are to be found in greater perfection than among the prelates on the episcopal bench, the peers of three centuries of nobility, and the recent occupants of the woolsack.'

It may be doubted whether the peers of three cen-

turies of nobility, a small minority, are endowed, in proportion to their pedigrees, with the logic, the wisdom, or the wit, although this limit includes the house of Russell, ennobled in 1539. Peers of meaner blood are quite on a par with them in this respect. Nor should it be forgotten how many of those who reflect, or have reflected, most honour on their House, received their training, their baptism of debate, in the House of Commons, and left that assembly with foreboding or regret. 'When I have turned out Walpole,' said Pulteney, 'I will retire into that hospital for invalids, the House of Lords.' On entering it as Earl of Bath, he was thus addressed by his old adversary, who had recently become Earl of Orford: 'My Lord Bath, you and I are now two as insignificant men as any in England.' When (in 1766) the citizens of London learned that the great commoner was to be First Minister, they were in transports of joy, and prepared for a general illumination. The lamps had actually been placed round the Monument, when the 'Gazette' announced that he had become an Earl. The lamps were taken down. The contemplated entertainments were countermanded, and (according to Macaulay) the clamour against him appears to have had a serious effect on the foreign relations of the country. 'The name of Pitt had been a charmed name. Our envoys tried in vain to conjure with the name of Chatham.'

A few months after his elevation, the first Lord Holland wrote to Selwyn that his object in taking a peerage was to cut up any further views of ambition by the roots. Brougham, in the Lords, after three or four exciting years, was like Samson with his hair cut. There is a letter from Charles Fox to the first Earl Grey, earnestly condoling with him on the acceptance of a peerage by his father; and who would not condole with a man of energy, laudable ambition, eminent political ability and debating power, like Lord Salis-

bury, on his being excluded in the prime of life from the arena in which all the decisive battles of the Constitution must be fought?

The House of Lords is generally and justly regarded as a main pillar of the social edifice; but a political writer of authority has plausibly maintained that the peerage would gain instead of losing by a fusion: that the eminent members would exercise more influence in the long run by (so to speak) leavening the popular assembly than they can ever hope to exercise in their hereditary one.[1]

Forms long outlive realities. The standing Order of the Lords for the regulation of conferences between the Houses runs thus:

'The place of our meeting with the Lower House upon conference is usually the Painted Chamber, where they are commonly before we come, and expect our leisure. We are to come thither in a whole body, and not some lords scattering before the rest, which both takes from the gravity of the lords, and besides may hinder the lords from taking their proper places. We are to sit there, and be covered; but they are at no committee or conference ever either to be covered or sit down in our presence, unless it be some infirm person, and that by connivance in a corner out of sight, to sit, but not to be covered.'

The 'Personal Anecdotes,' comprising three-fourths

[1] 'England and the English.' By the late Lord Lytton. The noble author, who delivered more than one fine and effective speech in the House of Commons, never addressed the Lords, although he carefully prepared five or six speeches, left among his papers, for delivery in the Upper House. Lord Macaulay, also, never spoke as a peer. Yet surely the House of Lords offers the most congenial audience for speakers who shine by intellectual richness and brilliancy, who owe little or nothing to the exciting current of debate. It is unfortunate that a tacit convention or understanding excludes the episcopal bench from secular topics of debate; for it is rich in eloquence of a high order. The late Lord Fitzwilliam, meeting the late Bishop of Winchester (Wilberforce) soon after his celebrated speech on the Corn Laws, told him that such a display of episcopal eloquence in the House of Lords was altogether contrary to rule. The Bishop of Peterborough (Magee) has more than once laid himself open to a similar reproof.

of the book before us, are arranged alphabetically and biographically, beginning Addington, Addison, Agnew, &c., and ending Wilberforce, Wilkes, Windham. This arrangement is fatal to generalisation of any kind. Epochs and subjects are thrown together without coherence or analogy, and a confused mass of desultory impressions is the result. To utilise the materials, we must classify them; and, adding to them what we have procured from other sources, we will endeavour to illustrate a few more of the distinctive features of the British Parliament.

Prominent amongst them must be ranked the proneness to be swayed by eloquence, and the abundant supply of it, of the best quality, at all times. In England, the oratorical ages, instead of being separated by long intervals like the literary ages, follow in unbroken succession. To the going and coming man we may again and again apply the noble imagery of Burke: 'Even then before this splendid orb (Chatham) was entirely set, and while the western horizon was in a blaze with his descending glory, on the opposite quarter of the heavens arose another luminary (C. Townshend), and, for the time, became lord of the ascendant.' Whenever speaking was possible, there were able, forcible, and fine speakers. Although the fame of many has been preserved only by description or tradition, no rational doubt can be entertained of their excellence. Sir Thomas More's wit, readiness, and eloquence were universally recognised by his contemporaries. Ben Jonson writes thus of Bacon:

'There happened in my time one noble speaker who was full of gravity in his speaking. His language, when he could spare or pass by a jest, was nobly censorious. No man ever spoke more neatly, more pressly, more weightily, or suffered less emptiness, less idleness, in what he uttered. No member of his speech but consisted of his own graces. His hearers could not cough or look aside from him without loss.

He commanded where he spoke, and had his judges angry and pleased at his devotion. No man had their affections more in his power. The fear of every man that heard him was *lest he should make an end.*'

Clarendon's pages teem with proof that the period included in his history was marked by debating ability of the highest order. The leading speakers were then earnest, plain, and practical, rather than rhetorical or declamatory. They were rarely full and flowing, rarely what is commonly called eloquent, rarely imaginative in the highest sense of the term. Their greatest effects were produced by terse weighty sentences, apt homely metaphors, sudden turns, quaint allusions, condensed reasoning, and bold apostrophes. They cannot be acquitted of pedantry, and they were occasionally long-winded. Hume describes Pym as opening the charge against Strafford 'in a long-studied discourse, divided into many heads after his manner;' and contemptuously referring to an attempt to put the parliamentary champions in balance with the most illustrious characters of antiquity—with Cato, Brutus, Cassius—the historian exclaims: 'Compare only one circumstance and consider its consequences. The leizure of those noble antients were (*sic*) totally employed in the study of Grecian eloquence and philosophy, in the cultivation of polite letters and civilised society. The whole discourse and language of the moderns were polluted with mysterious jargon, and full of the lowest and most vulgar hypocrisy.'

This was partly true of Vane, Cromwell, and many others when the Saints were uppermost: during 'Barebones' Parliament or in the worst days of the 'Rump.' But it was not true of the parliamentary celebrities of the antecedent or immediately ensuing periods—of 1628, 1640, or 1659; not true of Hampden, Holles, Digby, Capel, Hyde, Falkland, and a host of accomplished and highly-cultivated men, whose minds and

memories fairly ran over with classical illustrations. Of the two principal speakers quoted by Hume, in 1628, one, Sir Francis Seymour, refers to Herodotus, and the other, Sir Robert Philips, to Livy.

Sir Francis Seymour said:

'Let us not act like Cambyses's judges, who, when their approbation was demanded by the prince to some illegal measure, said, that, *Tho' there was a written law, the Persian kings might follow their own will and pleasure.* This was base flattery, fitter for our reproof than our imitation; and as fear, so flattery, taketh away the judgment. For my part, I shall shun both; and speak my mind with as much duty, as any man, to his majesty, without neglecting the public.

Sir Robert Philips:

'I read of a custom among the old Romans, that, once every year, they held a solemn festival, at which their slaves had liberty, without exception, to speak what they pleased, in order to ease their afflicted minds; and, on the conclusion of the festival, the slaves severally returned to their former servitudes.

'This institution may, with some distinction, well set forth our present state and condition. After the revolution of some time, and the grievous sufferance of many violent oppressions, we have now, at last, as those slaves, obtained, for a day, some liberty of speech: But shall not, I trust, be hereafter slaves: For we are born free. Yet, what new illegal burthens our estates and persons have groaned under, my heart yearns to think of, my tongue falters to utter.

. . . . . .

'I can live, tho' another, who has no right, be put to live along with me; nay, I can live, tho' burthened with impositions, beyond what at present I labour under: But to have my liberty, which is the soul of my life, ravished from me; to have my person pent up in a jail, without relief by law, and to be so adjudged,—O! improvident ancestors! O! unwise forefathers! to be so curious in providing for the quiet possession of our lands and the liberties of parliament; and, at the same time, to neglect our personal liberty, and let us

lie in prison, and that during pleasure, without redress or remedy! If this be law, why do we talk of liberties? Why trouble ourselves with disputes about a constitution, franchises, property of goods, and the like? What may any man call his own, if not the liberty of his person?'

Hume admits that the 'mysterious jargon' was occasionally lighted up by some sparks of the enthusiastic, which afterwards set the whole nation in combustion:

'If a man meet a dog alone,' said Rouse, 'the dog is fearful, tho' never so fierce by nature: But, if the dog have his master with him, he will set upon that man, from whom he fled before. This shows, that lower natures, being backed by higher, increase in courage and strength; and certainly man, being backed with omnipotency, is a kind of omnipotent creature. All things are possible to him that believes; and where all things are possible, there is a kind of omnipotency. Wherefore, let it be the unanimous consent and resolution of us all to make a vow and covenant from henceforth to hold fast our God and our religion; and then shall we henceforth expect with certainty happiness in this world.'

It would be difficult to cite a more apposite retort than Lord Digby's to Lord Keeper Finch's figurative assertion that whatever supplies had been raised from the subject had been restored to them in fructifying showers:

'It has been a frequent metaphor with these ministerial oppressors that whatever supplies have been raised from the subject have been again restored to them in fructifying showers; but it has been in hailstones and mildews to wither our hopes and batter and prostrate our affections.'

On carrying up the Bill of Attainder to the Lords, St. John, the Solicitor-General, said: 'It is true, we give law to hares and deer, for they are beasts of chase, but it was never accounted either cruel or unfair to destroy foxes or wolves wherever they can be found: for they are beasts of prey.'[1]

[1] Sir Walter Scott avowedly borrowed this apothegm (which would

The homeliness of Strafford's illustrations in his memorable defence is no less remarkable than their appositeness:

'Where has this species of guilt (constructive treason) been so long concealed? Where has this fire been so long buried, during so many centuries, that no smoke should appear, till it burst out at once, to consume me and my children? . . . . If I sail on the Thames, and split my vessel on an anchor, in case there be no buoy to give warning, the party shall pay me damage: but if the anchor be marked out, then is the striking on it at my own peril. Where is the mark set upon this crime? Where is the token by which I should discover it? It has lain concealed under water, and no human prudence, or human innocence, could save me from the destruction with which I am at present threatened.'

The language of the Royal Martyr bore no trace of the ambiguity or double-dealing with which he has been charged, and may be recommended, for idiomatic simplicity and force, to premiers and cabinets by whom royal speeches are composed or settled. 'You have taken the whole machine of government to pieces'—was his warning address to the Parliament of 1640—'a practice frequent with skilful artists when they desire to clear the wheels from any rust which may have grown upon them. The engine may again be restored to its former use and motions, provided it be put up entire, so as not a pin of it be wanting.' In the short speech which he delivered from the Speaker's chair on the occasion of the ill-advised attempt to seize the five members, he said: 'Well, since the birds are flown, I do expect that you will send them to me as soon as they return.'

hardly go down at Melton) to place it in the mouth of Rhoderic Dhu:—

'Though space and law the stag we lend,
Ere hound we slip, or bow we bend,
Who ever reck'd where, how, or when
The prowling fox was trapp'd and slain?'

In his apparently improvised reply to the message (March, 1642) inviting him to fix his residence in London, he said:

'I am so much amazed at this message that I know not what to answer. You speak of jealousies and fears! Lay your hands on your hearts and ask yourselves, whether I may not likeways be disturbed with fears and jealousies: And if so, I assure you, that this message has nothing lessened them.

'As to the militia, I thought so much of it before I gave that answer, and am so much assured, that the answer is agreeable to what in justice or reason you can ask, or I in honour grant, that I shall not alter it in any point.

'For my residence near you, I wish it might be safe and honourable, and that I had no cause to absent myself from Whitehall: Ask yourselves whether I have not.

'What would you have? Have I violated your laws? Have I denied to pass any bill for the ease and security of my subjects? I do not ask, what you have done for me.

'Have any of my people been transported with fears and apprehensions? I offer as free and general a pardon as yourselves can devise. All this considered, there is a judgment of heaven upon this nation, if these distractions continue.

'God so deal with me and mine as all my thoughts and intentions are upright for the maintenance of the true protestant profession, and for the observance and preservation of the laws; and I hope God will bless and assist those laws for *my* preservation.'

Or, for dignified eloquence, take the definitive reply to the demands of the Commons which shortly preceded the raising of the royal standard at Nottingham:

'Should I grant these demands, I may be waited on bareheaded: I may have my hand kissed: the title of majesty be continued to me; and *The King's authority, signified by both houses*, may be still the style of your commands: I may have swords and maces carried before me, and please myself with the sight of a crown and sceptre (tho' even these twigs would not long flourish, when the stock, upon which they grew, was dead): But as to true and real power, I

should remain but the outside, but the picture, but the sign, of a King.'

The oratorical claims of the Restoration cycle were amply sustained by Shaftesbury and Halifax, who were placed in marked contrast by the Exclusion Bill. 'When it came to be debated,' says Hume, 'the contest was very violent. Shaftesbury, Sutherland, and Essex argued for it: Halifax chiefly conducted the debate against it, and displayed an extent of capacity and a force of eloquence which had never been surpassed in that assembly. He was animated as well by the greatness of the occasion as by a rivalship to his uncle Shaftesbury whom, during that day's debate, he seemed, in the judgment of all, to have totally eclipsed.'

In comparing these two, Macaulay, an enthusiastic admirer of Halifax, says: 'The power of Shaftesbury over large masses was unrivalled. Halifax was disqualified by his whole character, moral and intellectual, for the part of a demagogue. It was in small circles, and, above all, in the House of Lords, that his ascendency was felt.' Dryden paints Halifax—

> 'Of piercing wit and pregnant thought;
> Endued by nature and by learning taught
> To move assemblies.'

Such was the contemporary impression of Halifax, whose oratory is utterly lost; but we nowhere read that Shaftesbury was deemed a mob orator, and, judging from the tone and style of his printed speeches, as well as from the recorded effects of some of them, we should infer that what the brilliant historian says of his favourite is equally true of the peculiar object of his vituperation: that it was in small circles, and, above all, in the House of Lords, that Shaftesbury's ascendency was felt. He is never vehement or declamatory. He never appeals to the passions of his audience: he appeals to their reason, or to their pre-

judices when these have gained the strength of reason, and appeals in a manner which it requires no small degree of refinement and culture to appreciate. His sound sense, his ample stores of knowledge and observation, his dexterity, his irony, his wit, would be lost upon a turbulent assembly as surely as his little person would be submerged in a crowd; and not a fragment of his composition has been preserved which does not bear the impress of a certain description of fastidiousness. Strange to say, these fragments manifest that very proneness to generalisation which Macaulay supposes distinctive of Halifax. Thus, in the speech against Cromwell's Peers:

'After their quality, give me leave to speak a word or two of their qualifications; which certainly ought, in reason, to carry some proportion with the employment they design themselves. The House of Lords are the King's great hereditary Council; they are the highest court of judicature; they have their part in judging and determining of the reasons for making new laws and abrogating old: from amongst them we take our great officers of State: they are commonly our generals at land, and our admirals at sea. In conclusion, they are both of the essence and constitution of our old government; and have, besides, the greatest and noblest share in the administration. Now, certainly, Sir, to judge according to the dictates of reason, one would imagine some small faculties and endowments to be necessary for discharging such a calling; and those such as are not usually acquired in shops and warehouses, nor found by following the plough: and what other academies most of their lordships have been bred in but their shops, what other arts they have been versed in but those which more required good arms and good shoulders than good heads, I think we are yet to be informed.'

'The wit of irony (says Sydney Smith, in his Lectures) consists in the surprise excited by the discovery of that relation which exists between the apparent praise and the real blame. I shall quote a noble specimen of

irony, from the "Preface" of "Killing no Murder."' It would be difficult to find a better, if not nobler, specimen than a passage in the speech before us:

'But, Sir, I leave this argument; and, to be as good as my word, come to put you in mind of some of their services, and the obligations you owe them for the same. To speak nothing of one of my Lords Commissioners' valour at Bristol,[1] nor of another noble lord's brave adventure at the Bear-garden,[2] I must tell you, Sir, that most of them have had the courage to do things which, I may boldly say, few other Christians durst so have adventured their souls to have attempted: they have not only subdued their enemies, but their masters that raised and maintained them: they have not only conquered Scotland and Ireland, but rebellious England too, and there suppressed a malignant party of magistrates and laws; and, that nothing should be wanting to make them indeed complete conquerors, without the help of philosophy they have even conquered themselves. All shame they have subdued as perfectly as all justice; the oaths they have taken they have as easily digested as their old General could himself: public covenants and engagements they have trampled under foot. In conclusion, so entire a victory they have over themselves, that their consciences are as much their servants, Mr. Speaker, as we are. But give me leave to conclude with that which is more admirable than all this, and shows the confidence they have of themselves and us: after having many times trampled on the authority of the House of Commons, and no less than five times dissolved them, they hope, for those good services to the House of Commons, to be made a House of Lords.'

'Upon the debate of this grand affair (the impeachment of Lord Danby) we are told of a very peculiar speech pronounced by the Earl of Carnarvon, a lord who is said never to have spoken before in that House, who, having been heated with wine, and more excited to display his abilities by the Duke of Buckingham (who

[1] Fiennes, condemned to death by a court-martial for cowardice.

[2] Colonel Pride, who endeavoured to suppress bear-baiting by a wholesale slaughter of bears.

meant no favour to the Treasurer, but only ridicule), was resolved before he went up to speak upon any subject that would offer itself. Accordingly he stood up and delivered himself to this effect:'

'My lords, I understand but little of Latin, but a good deal of English, and not a little of the English history, from which I have learnt the mischiefs of such prosecutions as these, and the ill fate of the prosecutors. I could bring many circumstances, and those very ancient; but, my lords, I shall go no farther back than the latter end of Queen Elizabeth's reign: at which time the Earl of Essex was run down by Sir Walter Raleigh, and your lordships very well know what became of Sir Walter Raleigh. My Lord Bacon, he ran down Sir Walter Raleigh, and your lordships know what became of Lord Bacon. The Duke of Buckingham, he ran down my Lord Bacon, and your lordships know what happened to the Duke of Buckingham. Sir Thomas Wentworth, afterwards Earl of Strafford, ran down the Duke of Buckingham, and you all know what became of him. Sir Harry Vane, he ran down the Earl of Strafford, and your lordships know what became of Sir Harry Vane. Chancellor Hyde, he ran down Sir Harry Vane, and your lordships know what became of the Chancellor. Sir Thomas Osborne, now Earl of Danby, ran down Chancellor Hyde; but what will become of the Earl of Danby, your lordships best can tell. But let me see that man that dare run the Earl of Danby down, and we shall soon see what will become of *him*.'

This being pronounced with a remarkable humour and tone, the Duke of Buckingham, both surprised and disappointed, after his way, cried out: 'The man is inspired, and claret has done the business.'[1]

The witty and profligate Lord Rochester was less fortunate when, to win a bet or stimulated by the taunts of his gay companions, he made a similar attempt and began thus: 'My lords, I rise this time. My lords, I divide my discourse into four branches.' Here he faltered and paused. 'My lords, if ever I rise again

[1] Parliamentary Debates for 1678.

in this House, I give you leave to cut me off, root and branch, for ever.'[1]

Conspicuous among the debaters of the Lower House during the ten years preceding the Revolution of 1688, was Henry Booth, afterwards Earl of Warrington, eight of whose speeches are printed from notes supplied or corrected by himself. We give a specimen from 'A Speech against the Bishops voting in case of Blood:'

'It is strange the bishops are so jealous of their cause as not to adventure it on their great Diana, the canon law, by which they are expressly forbidden to meddle in case of blood. Perhaps they would do by the canon law as it is said of the idolaters in the Old Testament, that of part of the timber they made a god and fell down and worshipped it; the rest they either burnt in the fire, or cast it to the dunghill. For they tell you that the canon law was abolished by the Reformation, and that none but Papists yield obedience to it, and, therefore, now they are not tied up by the canon, but may sit and vote in case of blood if they please. I should be very glad if they were as averse to Popery in everything else, and particularly that they would leave ceremonies indifferent and not contend so highly for them, whereby they make the breach wider and heighten the differences amongst Protestants, in the doing of which they do the Pope's work most effectually. I wish they would consent to have a new code of canons, for those that are now extant are the old Popish canons. I like the bishops very well; but I wish that bishops were reduced to their primitive institution, for I fear that, whilst there is in England a Lord Bishop, the Church will not stand very steadily.'[2]

[1] It was the author of the 'Characteristics,' when Lord Ashley and a member of the House of Commons, that turned his temporary embarrassment into an oratorical success. He was speaking on the Bill for granting counsel to prisoners in cases of high treason, when he got confused, but after a short pause continued: 'If I, Mr. Speaker, who rise only to offer my opinion on the Bill now depending, am so confounded that I am unable to express the least of what I intended to say, what must be the condition of that man who without any assistance is pleading for his life?'

[2] 'A Collection of the Parliamentary Debates in England. From the year 1668 to the present time.' Printed in 1741. Vol. ii. p. 153.

At the meeting of the Convention in 1688, we hear of Sir Thomas Littleton, 'gifted with a vehement and piercing logic, which had often, when, after a long sitting, the candles had been lighted, roused the languishing House, and decided the event of the debate.' There, too, was William Sacheverell, an orator whose great parliamentary abilites were many years later a favourite theme of old men who lived to see the conflicts of Walpole and Pulteney. There too were other veterans, but all were speedily to be thrown into the shade by two young Whigs, who then took their seats for the first time—Charles Montagu and John Somers.[1]

We are compelled to take the oratorical reputation of each of them upon trust. Lord Campbell says of Somers, that 'although he sat in Parliament from the beginning of the year 1689 till his death, not much short of thirty years, and during a considerable part of that period led a great party, first in the Lower and then in the Upper House, there is not extant as much of any one speech he delivered as would make half a column of a newspaper; and in the very scanty reports of parliamentary proceedings in the reign of William and Anne, his name is rarely mentioned.'

Macaulay says: 'His speeches have perished, but his state papers remain, and are models of terse, luminous, and dignified eloquence.' Amongst modern orators, the closest parallel would be Lord Lyndhurst. In no instance do the reports purport to give more than the substance of what Somers said; and the most successful efforts of Montagu have been similarly reduced to little better than a *caput mortuum*. Thus, we are assured by the historian that the extraordinary ability with which, at the beginning of the year 1792, he managed the conference on the Bill for regulating trials in cases of treason, placed him at once in the first rank of parliamentary orators; but the report of his speech, filling

[1] Macaulay's 'History,' chap. x.

eight pages, is a dry abstract or abridgment of his argument.

One of the severest and best merited rebuffs received by King William was the opposition to the grant to the Earl of Portland in 1695 of sundry lordships with the royalties in Wales, forming a large proportion of the demesnes of the Principality. When this affair was brought before the House of Commons, Mr. Price, 'a gentleman of great parts,' since one of the Barons of the Exchequer, amongst other pointed things, is reported to have said:—

'I shall make no severe remarks on this great man, for his greatness makes us little, and will make the Crown both poor and precarious. And when God shall please to send us a Prince of Wales, he may have such a present of a Crown made him as a Pope did to King John, who was surnamed *Sans Terre*, and was by his father, King Henry II., made Lord of Ireland, which grant was confirmed by the Pope, who sent him a crown of peacocks' feathers in derision of his power and the poverty of his revenue. I would have us to consider that we are Englishmen, and must, like patriots, stand by our country and not suffer it to become tributary to strangers. We have rejoiced that we have beat out of this kingdom Popery and slavery, and we do now with as great joy entertain Socinianism and poverty, and yet we see our properties daily given away, and our liberties must soon follow.'[1]

The palm of eloquence in the next generation is, by universal consent, awarded to Bolingbroke, of whom

[1] 'Parliamentary Debates.' The entire speech was printed in 1702 under the title of 'Gloria Cambriæ, or Speech of a Bold Briton against a Dutch Prince of Wales.' Macaulay referring to it remarks: 'Price was the bold Briton whose speech, *never, I believe, spoken*, was printed in 1702. He would have better deserved to be called bold if he had published his impertinence while William was living.' According to the reporter in the 'Parliamentary Debates,' 'This short and eloquent speech made so great an impression that Mr. Price's motion was carried by an unanimous consent.' Smollett and Belsham both speak of the effect of the speech as delivered; and it is on record that equally strange language, or 'impertinence,' was hazarded by Mr. Price, as member of a deputation, before the Lords of the Treasury.

not one spoken sentence has been preserved. There is a current story that when the company were speculating on what lost or missing production was most to be regretted, and one named the lost works of Livy, another those of Tacitus, Pitt at once declared for a speech of Bolingbroke. All accounts agree that his voice and person were eminently adapted for oratorical display; and his writings abound in indications of the qualities by which he won his admitted supremacy in debate.[1] Take, for example, what Lord Brougham calls 'a noble passage,' from the 'Dissertation on Parties:'—

'If King Charles had found the nation plunged in corruption; the people choosing their representatives for money, without any other regard; and these representatives of the people, as well as the nobility, reduced by luxury to beg the unhallowed alms of a court; or to receive, like miserable hirelings, the wages of iniquity from a minister; if he had found the nation, I say, in this condition (which extravagant supposition one cannot make without horror), he might have dishonoured her abroad, and impoverished and oppressed her at home, though he had been the weakest prince on earth, and his ministers the most odious and contemptible men that ever presumed to be ambitious. Our fathers might have fallen into circumstances which compose the very quintessence of political misery. They might have "sold their birthright for porridge," which was their own. They might have been bubbled by the foolish, bullied by the fearful, and insulted by those whom they despised. They would have deserved to be slaves, and they might have been treated as such. When a free people crouch, like camels, to be loaded, the next at hand—no matter who—mounts them, and they soon feel the whip, and the spur of their tyrant; for a tyrant, whether prince or minister, resembles the devil in many respects; particularly in this: He is often both the

[1] 'Lord Bolingbroke's productions, with all their defects in argument, method, and precision, contain a force and energy which our orators rarely aim at, though it is evident that such an elevated style has much better grace in an orator than a writer, and is assured of more prompt and astonishing success.'—(Hume, 'Essay on Eloquence.')

tempter and tormentor. He makes the criminal and he punishes the crime.'

Or the following specimen of his imagery, which has been pronounced as rich and varied as Dryden's and more chaste :—

'It is evident that a minister, in every circumstance of life, stands in as much need of us public writers as we of him: in his prosperity he can no more subsist without daily praise, than we without daily bread; and the farther he extends his views, the more necessary are we to his support. Let him speak as contemptuously of us as he pleases, for that is frequently the manner of those who employ us most, and pay us best; yet will it fare with his ambition as with a lofty tree, which cannot shoot its branches into the clouds, unless its root work into the dirt, from which it rose, on which it stands, and by which it is nourished.'

After reading these passages, we can readily believe the tradition that he dictated his compositions to an amanuensis. His periods swell and amplify, as if the author was in the full fervour of declamation; and, so far as mere readers are concerned, his writings might be improved by a judicious retrenchment of their redundancies. The fulness and richness of St. John's printed language, however, leave no doubt that he amply fulfilled in his own person what he requires in the genuine orator, when he lays down that 'eloquence must flow like a stream that is fed by an abundant spring, and not spout forth a little frothy water on some gaudy day, and remain dry the rest of the year.'

He was by no means a solitary instance, in the last century, of a very young man becoming the mouthpiece of a party, or taking the lead in the conduct of affairs, at his first entrance into public life. The Pitts, father and son, and Charles Fox, are remarkable examples of this description of precocity; and the phenomenon ceases to inspire wonder, if we reflect on the very different sort of training required for public life in

their day; when political economy was in its infancy, and the multifarious social problems based on it, or on our complex system of commercial arrangements and internal administration, were unknown. To be at home in English history and the Latin classics—to be familiarly versed in the commonplaces of civil and religious liberty, prerogative, toleration, standing armies, the Protestant succession, and the balance of power—to have a copious and well-chosen vocabulary—to be well born or well connected—to be fluent, animated, and bold—was enough, and more than enough, to raise the hopes of an Opposition, or make a Minister look about him. A modern debater addresses the entire nation through the parliamentary reporters, and his reputation depends in a great measure on the estimate they may found on the substance of his speeches. St. John had only to satisfy those who were present when he spoke.

In his 'Spirit of Patriotism' he labours hard to prove from the examples of Demosthenes and Cicero, that all the powers of eloquence, unaided by study and experience, will prove unavailing in the long run; and if he means that they will not make a statesman, a patriot, an enlightened reformer or benefactor of his country, he may be right. But he has shown in another place how great and how baneful an influence might be acquired in the House of Commons by arts, acquirements, and expedients which have no apparent affinity to knowledge or judgment, comprehensiveness or solidity. 'You know the nature of that assembly,' he writes to Windham; 'they grow, like hounds, fond of the man who shows them game, and by whose halloa they are used to be encouraged.' The Tory squires grew fond of St. John, much as their successors grew fond of Mr. Disraeli in our time, for giving voice to their antipathies and hunting down the most respectable of their opponents. In serious argu-

ment, and whenever an appeal could be made to reason, justice, or constitutional doctrine, he was invariably worsted by Somers; but his dashing oratory carried all before it in debate; and it was by slow degrees, and by dint of moral courage and unflinching energy, rather than by power of words, that Walpole succeeded in establishing a partial counterpoïse.[1]

Bolingbroke had many contemporaries who attained distinction in the same walk: Atterbury, Bishop of Rochester, for one; who, on the death of Queen Anne, offered to head a troop of horse in his lawn sleeves, and proclaim James III. at Charing Cross. In the debate on the Occasional Conformity and Schism Bill in the House of Lords, in December, 1718, it was very warmly opposed by Atterbury, who said, 'he had prophesied last winter this Bill would be attempted in the present session, and he was sorry to find he had proved a true prophet.' Lord Coningsby rose immediately after the bishop, and remarked, that 'one of the right reverends had set himself forth as a prophet; but, for his part, he did not know what prophet to liken him to, unless to that famous prophet Balaam, who was reproved by his own ass.' The bishop, in reply: 'Since the noble lord hath discovered in our manners such a similitude, I am well content to be compared to the prophet Balaam; but, my lords, I am at a loss how to make out the other part of the parallel. I am sure that I have been reproved by nobody but his lordship.'

This may pair off with Rowland Hill's retort, who read from the pulpit an anonymous letter reproaching him with driving to chapel in his carriage, and reminding him that this was not our Blessed Lord's mode of travelling. He then said: 'I must admit that it is not. But if the writer of this letter will come here next

[1] What is here said of Bolingbroke is reprinted from a review of Macknight's 'Life of Bolingbroke,' in the 'Edinburgh Review' for October, 1863.

Sunday bridled and saddled, I shall have great pleasure in following our Blessed Lord's example in that as in all other matters within my power.'

The famous Lord Peterborough was as ready for an encounter in the senate as in the field. Speaking in opposition to the Septennial Bill in 1716 he said, 'that if this present Parliament continued beyond the time for which they were chosen, he knew not how to express the manner of their existence, unless, begging leave of that venerable bench (turning to the bishops) they had recourse to the distinction used in the Athanasian Creed; for they would be neither made nor created, but *proceeding*.'

After Bolingbroke, or rather after his sudden fall, which he survived for thirty-seven years, we arrive at Walpole and the phalanx of assailants he provoked as if for the express purpose of encountering them single-handed and taking all their points upon his shield. During the first fourteen years of his administration the most formidable was Pulteney, whom Macaulay calls the greatest leader of Opposition that the House of Commons had ever seen. Once, in answering a charge, Walpole laid his hand upon his breast, and said:—

'Nil conscire sibi, nulli pallescere culpæ.'

Pulteney objected that his Latin was as faulty as his argument, the correct reading being *nullâ pallescere culpâ*. A bet of a guinea was proposed and accepted. A 'Horace' was sent for on the instant: Pulteney proved right, and holding up the guinea, which Walpole had thrown across the table, exclaimed, 'It is the only money I have received from the Treasury for many years, and it shall be the last.' The identical guinea is now in the Medal Room of the British Museum, with a memorandum in the handwriting of Pulteney recording the incident, with this addition to the common version: 'I told him (Walpole) I could

take the money without any blush on my side, but believed it was the only money he ever gave in the House where the giver and receiver ought not both equally to blush.'

When Walpole first spoke in the House his manner was ungraceful, he paused for want of words, and could only stutter and stammer. 'What future promise (it was asked) was there in that sturdy, bull-necked, red-faced young member for Castle Rising, who looked like the son of a small farmer, and seemed by his gait as though he had been brought up to follow the plough?'[1] This was in 1701. Speaking of occurrences in 1713, Bishop Newton relates that, when Steele was to be expelled the House of Commons, Mr. Walpole, Mr. Pulteney, and Mr. Addison, were commissioned to go to him by the noblemen and members of the Kit-Cat Club, with the positive order and determination that Steele should not make his own speech, but Addison should make it for him, and he should recite it from the other's writing, without any insertion or addition of his own. 'Addison thought this a hard injunction, and said that he must be like a school-boy, and desire the gentlemen to give him a little sense. Walpole said that it was impossible to speak a speech in cold blood; but being pressed, he said he would try, and immediately spoke a very good speech of what he thought proper for Steele to say on the occasion; and the next day in the House made another speech as good, or better, on the same subject; but so totally different from the former, that there was scarce a single argument or thought the same.'

Walpole's powers were displayed to advantage in the debate on the renewal of the Septennial Act in 1734;[2]

[1] Macknight's 'Life of Bolingbroke.'

[2] Sir John St. Aubyn, another speaker of note, said in this debate: 'For this reason, short Parliaments have been less corrupt than long ones: they are observed, like streams of water, always to grow more impure the greater distance they run from the fountain head.'

especially when replying to Sir William Wyndham, who had thought proper 'to suppose a man devoid of all notions of virtue or honour, of no great family and of but mean fortune, raised to be chief minister of State by the concurrence of many whimsical events.' Walpole, 'supposing' in his turn, made a bitter and telling attack on Sir William's friend, political ally and (it was more than suspected) prompter, Bolingbroke:

'But now, Sir, let me too suppose, and the House being cleared, I am sure no person that hears me can come within the description of the person I am to suppose—let us suppose in this, or some other unfortunate country, an anti-minister, who thinks himself a person of so great and extensive parts, and of so many eminent qualifications, that he looks upon himself as the only person in the kingdom capable to conduct the public affairs of the nation, and therefore christening every other gentleman who has the honour to be employed in the administration by the name of blunderer: suppose this fine gentleman lucky enough to have gained over to his party some persons really of fine parts, of ancient families, and of great fortunes, and others of desperate views, arising from disappointed and malicious hearts: all these gentlemen, with respect to their political behaviour, moved by him, and by him solely: all they say, either in private, or in public, being only a repetition of the words he has put into their mouths, and a spitting out of that venom which he has infused into them: and yet we may suppose this leader not really liked by any, even of those who so blindly follow him, and hated by all the rest of mankind: we'll suppose this anti-minister to be in a country where he really ought not to be, and where he could not have been, but by an effect of too much goodness and mercy; yet endeavouring with all his might, and with all his heart, to destroy the fountain from whence that mercy flowed.

'Let us farther suppose this anti-minister to have travelled, and at every court where he was, thinking himself the greatest minister, and making it his trade to betray the secrets of every court where he had before been; void of all faith or honour, and betraying every master he had ever served. Sir, I could carry my suppositions a great deal farther; and, I may

say, I mean no person now in being; but if we can suppose such a one, can there be imagined a greater disgrace to human nature than such a wretch as this?'

He was far from disdainful of imagery or classical illustration. Thus, in the debate on the Peerage Bill of 1719, enacting that the English peerage should not be enlarged beyond six above the present number, nor, except upon failure of male issue, be supplied by new creations:—

'Among the Romans, the wisest people upon earth, the temple of Fame was placed behind the temple of Virtue, to denote that there was no coming to the former without going through the other. But if this bill should pass into law, one of the most powerful incentives to virtue would be taken away, since there would be no coming to honour but through the winding-sheet of an old decrepit lord and the grave of an extinct noble family.'

It was in 1736, five years before the fall of Walpole, that the voice of the 'great commoner,' heard for the first time within the walls of Parliament, in which he had sat silent for a session, elicited the well-known remark of the great minister, 'We must muzzle that terrible cornet of horse.' He was rather unmuzzled than muzzled by being deprived of his cornetcy in the Blues; for all members of either service (like the bishops within living memory) were prescriptively bound to vote with the ministers. When, in a preceding reign, several persons holding commissions from the Crown had gone out in a division against the Court, a Secretary of State, Lord Middleton, went down to the Bar to reproach them as they came in, and thus addressed a Captain Kendal, who was one of them: 'Sir, have you not a troop of horse in his Majesty's service?' 'Yes, my lord, but my brother died last night and has left me 700*l.* a year.'

Pitt's character was admirably drawn by Grattan, who says of his eloquence that it was an era in the

senate: that it resembled sometimes the thunder, and sometimes the music, of the spheres. Judged by its effects or according to the *action-action-action* theory, he must be deemed the greatest of English orators. No one ever came near him in the sway which he exercised over his audience, whilst the spell of his voice, his eye, his tones, his gestures, was upon them: as when he fixed upon Mr. Grenville the appellation of The Gentle Shepherd, or (as already mentioned) struck terror into the Chief Justice of Chester. It is related that once, in the House of Commons, he began a speech with the words, 'Sugar, Mr. Speaker ——' and then, observing a smile to pervade the audience, he paused, looked fiercely around, and with a loud voice, rising in its notes and swelling into vehement anger, he pronounced again the word 'Sugar!' three times; and having thus quelled the House, and extinguished every appearance of levity or laughter, turned round and disdainfully asked,- 'Who will laugh at sugar now?'[1] Several other instances are well known. It was his perfect acting that carried him through: without it some of his most applauded bursts would have been failures. No one else could have hazarded the apostrophe to the tapestried figure of Lord Howard of Effingham, with its overstrained application to the argument:

'I invoke the genius of the Constitution. From the tapestry that adorns these walls, the immortal ancestor of this noble lord frowns with indignation at the disgrace of his country. In vain did he defend the liberty, and establish

[1] Boswell tells a story of Dr. Johnson's exercising a similar power over a distinguished company at Mrs. Garrick's, who presumed to smile at his saying that 'the woman had a *bottom* of good sense.' 'He glanced sternly round and called out in a strong tone, "Where's the merriment?" Then collecting himself, and looking awful, and as it were searching his mind for a still more ludicrous word, he slowly pronounced, "I say the woman was *fundamentally* sensible," as if he had said, Hear this word, and laugh if you dare. We all sat composed as at a funeral.'

the religion of Britain, against the tyranny of Rome, if these worse than Popish cruelties and inquisitorial practices are endured among us.'

The crutch in his hands became an instrument of oratory, and he would with equal effect have idealised the dagger which Burke flung on the floor of the House, producing nothing but a smothered laugh and a joke from Sheridan: 'The gentleman has brought us the knife, but where is the fork?' Chatham shone and impressed by boldness, vehemence, intensity, dignity, and grace. His imagination was not of the richest order. There is only one really fine and original image amongst the splendid fragments that have been preserved of him: 'America, if she falls, will fall like the strong man; she will embrace the pillars of the State, and pull down the Constitution along with her.' The very next sentence contains a commonplace and even coarse metaphor: 'Is this your boasted peace—to sheathe the sword, not in its scabbard, but in the bowels of your countrymen?' He relied as much as Danton on *l'audace*, as when he said, 'I rejoice that America has resisted;' or (stronger still), 'I hope some dreadful calamity will befall the country that will open the eyes of the King.' On being called to order, he went on, 'What I have spoken I have spoken conditionally, but I now retract the condition. I speak it absolutely, and I hope that some signal calamity will befall the country.'

He bore down all by his intensity, by reiterating blow upon blow as on an anvil: 'I say we must necessarily undo these violent, oppressive Acts. They must be repealed. You will repeal them. I pledge myself for it that you will in the end repeal them. I stake my reputation on it. I will consent to be taken for an idiot if they are not finally repealed. Avoid, then, this humiliating, degrading necessity.'

Two of his best speeches were fortunately reported

by Hugh Boyd, and one of these (Nov. 18, 1777) supplies examples of each description of excellence that distinguished him. His grace and felicity of transition are displayed in the exordium :—

'I rise, my lords, to declare my sentiments on this most solemn and serious subject. It has imposed a load upon my mind, which, I fear, nothing can remove; but which impels me to endeavour its alleviation, by a free and unreserved communication of my sentiments.

'In the first part of the address, I have the honour of heartily concurring with the noble Earl who moved it. No man feels sincerer joy than I do; none can offer more genuine congratulations on every accession of strength to the Protestant succession: I therefore join in every congratulation on the birth of another princess, and the happy recovery of her Majesty. But I must stop here, my courtly complaisance will carry me no further: I will not join in congratulation on misfortune and disgrace: I cannot concur in a blind and servile address, which approves, and endeavours to sanctify, the monstrous measures that have heaped disgrace and misfortune upon us—that have brought ruin to our doors. This, my lords, is a perilous and tremendous moment! It is no time for adulation. The smoothness of flattery cannot now avail—cannot save us in this rugged and awful crisis. It is now necessary to instruct the throne in the language of truth. We must dispel the delusion and the darkness which envelope it; and display, in its full danger and true colours, the ruin that is brought to our doors.

. . . . .

'You may swell every expense, and every effort, still more extravagantly; pile and accumulate every assistance you can buy or borrow; traffic and barter with every little German Prince,—your efforts are for ever vain and impotent—doubly so from this mercenary aid on which you rely; for it irritates, to an incurable resentment, the minds of your enemies —to overrun them with the mercenary sons of rapine and plunder; devoting them and their possessions to the rapacity of hireling cruelty! If I were an American, as I am an Englishman, while a foreign troop was landed in my country, I never would lay down my arms—never—never—never.

. . .

'In a just and necessary war, to maintain the rights or honour of my country, I would strip the shirt from my back to support it. But in such a war as this, unjust in its principle, impracticable in its means, and ruinous in its consequences, I would not contribute a single effort, nor a single shilling. I do not call for vengeance on the heads of those who have been guilty; I only recommend to them to make their retreat; let them walk off; and let them make haste, or they may be assured that speedy and condign punishment will overtake them.'

The simplicity of the language is no less remarkable than its strength. The swell and pomp are in the manner and the thought. He was wont to recommend the assiduous study of Barrow's Sermons for style.

If a cultivated American were asked to name the greatest American orator, he would name Patrick Henry, whom Jefferson declared to be the greatest orator that ever lived.[1] If a cultivated Frenchman were asked to name the greatest French orator, he would name Mirabeau. The fame of each rests upon precisely the same foundation as that of Chatham, upon the tradition of the electrical shocks which they produced on great occasions by the glow, the lightning flash, the intermittent splendour, the condensed vitality, of genius. Grandeur and sublimity are heightened by vagueness of outline. A mountain, a castle, or a line-of-battle ship, looms larger through the haze. It may be that Patrick Henry, Mirabeau, and Chatham, all three, stand better with posterity than they would stand had they been reported like the leading speakers of our time. Neither appears to have shone in a set speech. Chatham certainly did not. His elaborate panegyric on Wolfe has been declared the worst of his performances. He appears to have frequently acted on Sydney Smith's maxim for conversation: to begin

[1] Specimens of Patrick Henry's style and manner are given in the 'Essay on American Orators and Statesmen' in the first Series of these Essays.

with plain talk and take your chance of something rising out of it; or on that of Rousseau for the composition of a love-letter: to begin without knowing what you are going to say, and end without knowing what you have said. 'I must sit still,' he once said aside to Lord Shelburne, 'for, when once I am up, everything that is in my mind comes out.'

This habit of giving the rein to his impulsiveness and diverging from the argument at will, spoiled him for a debater; although it favoured the display of his unequalled powers of ridicule, sarcasm, and invective, when provoked by an interruption, an unguarded smile, or a gesture of dissent. His most telling replies were bitter personalities; like the celebrated one (paraphrased by Dr. Johnson) to old Horace Walpole, who had twitted him with his youth; or the terrible attack on Henry Fox, the first Lord Holland, who, in reference to a comment on the ill-looks of a witness at the Bar, had said: 'It is unjust, ungenerous, and unmanly to censure a man for that signature which God had impressed upon his countenance, and which therefore he could not by any means remedy or avoid.' Pitt started to his feet: 'I agree from my heart with the observation of my fellow-member: it is forcible, it is judicious, it is true. But there are some (looking full at Fox) upon whose faces the hand of Heaven has so *stamped* the mark of wickedness, that it were impiety not to give it credit.' A reply of the higher and more comprehensive kind, embracing the whole course of the discussion and all the bearings of the subject—like his son's on the slave-trade, in April, 1792—was as much above and beyond his intellectual range as an epic poem or a history.

Applying what a Roman critic said of Cicero and his times, Mr. Charles Butler (writing in 1824) hazards the opinion that no member of either House of the British Parliament will be ranked among the orators of

his country whom Lord North did not see or who did not see Lord North. Mr. Massey suggests that a contemporary of Lord North's might perhaps have said the same of Sir Robert Walpole; and we are far from clear that the saying would not hold equally good of Lord Palmerston. Let us come to particulars. Lord North saw or was seen by Lord Chatham and his son William Pitt, by the first Lord Holland and Charles James Fox, by Burke, Sheridan, Murray (Lord Mansfield), Dunning, Barré, Charles Townshend. Sir Robert Walpole saw or was seen by Lord Chatham, the first Lord Holland, Pulteney, Bolingbroke, Sir William Wyndham, Yonge, Carteret, Chesterfield, Murray. Lord Palmerston saw or was seen by William Pitt, Charles James Fox, Sheridan, Windham, Grattan, Plunket, Tierney, Grey, Grenville, Canning, Peel, Brougham, Copley, Sheil, O'Connell, Derby, Russell, Ellenborough (Earl of), Wilberforce (Bishop), Macaulay, Disraeli, Gladstone, Cobden, Bright, with many others whom the noble Lord would have been glad to hail as colleagues or proud to encounter in debate. But the line must be drawn somewhere; and we wish it to be clearly understood that we are not here dealing with political opinions or principles, with consistency or inconsistency, with public policy or statesmanship. We are critics, mere critics, of oratory for the nonce; and the degree of excellence attained in eloquence, in rhetorical skill, or in the use of the recognised weapons of parliamentary warfare, is the sole criterion of merit we shall apply.

Oddly enough, the first reflection which a review of these three contrasted eras or groups forces upon us is that neither of the three centre figures, neither Walpole, North, nor Palmerston, attained or retained his position by oratory. Sound manly sense, broad views, a high estimate and thorough knowledge of their country and their countrymen, proud self-confidence, rectitude

of purpose which more than half redeemed an inordinate love of place and power, equally characterized Walpole and Palmerston, although the fixed aim of the one was national honour at the risk of war, and that of the other a peace-at-any-price prosperity.

Like Walpole, Lord Palmerston had all the speaking and debating ability that was needed for the practical uses of a minister—*par negotiis, neque supra.* It is sufficient to refer to his speech on the Pacifico question; a speech which, embracing the whole foreign policy of the country, occupying four or five hours in the delivery, and spoken without a pause or a note, must take rank amongst parliamentary masterpieces, although it hardly ever rose to what is popularly called eloquence. Even the peroration, containing a now celebrated phrase, did not rise above the level of unimpassioned argument:—

'I therefore fearlessly challenge the verdict which this House, as representing a political, commercial, and constitutional country, is to give on the question now before it; whether the principles on which her Majesty's Government has been conducted, and the sense of duty which has led us to think ourselves bound to afford protection to our fellow-subjects abroad, are proper and fitting guides for those who are charged with the government of England: and whether, as the Roman, in days of old, held himself free from indignity when he could say, *Civis Romanus sum*; so also a British subject, in whatever land he may be, shall feel confident that the watchful eye and the strong arm of England will protect him against injustice and wrong.[1]

[1] It was on the fourth night of the same debate (June 28, 1850) that Sir Alexander Cockburn (now Chief Justice of England) established a reputation for eloquence, which has gone on steadily increasing, although the scene of its display, and consequently its character, have been changed. At the conclusion of his speech—to use the words of Sir Robert Peel who followed him—'one half of the Treasury benches were left empty, whilst honourable members ran one after another, tumbling over each other in their haste, to shake hands with the honourable and learned member.'

Lord Palmerston had humour of the genial give-and-take kind, which, for a party leader, is often more serviceable than wit. He was told that Mr. Osborne, a popular speaker, whose dash and sparkle are enhanced by good feeling and sagacity, regretted a personal conflict, which he had provoked. 'Tell him,' said Lord Palmerston, 'that I am not the least offended, the more particularly because I think I had the best of it.'

Burke thus coarsely but graphically alluded to Lord North; 'The noble lord who spoke last, after extending his right leg a full yard before his left, rolling his flaming eyes, and moving his ponderous frame, has at length opened his mouth.' The noble lord's figure was certainly ill fitted for oratorical effect, but by dint of tact, temper, and wit, he converted even his personal disadvantages into means of persuasion or conciliation.

'One member,' he said, 'who spoke of me, called me "that thing called a minister." To be sure,' he said, patting his large form, 'I am a thing; the member, therefore, when he called me a "thing," said what was true; and I could not be angry with him. But when he added, "that thing called a minister," he called me that thing which of all things he himself wished most to be, and therefore I took it as a compliment.'

With equal adroitness he turned his incurable sleepiness to account. When a fiery declaimer, after calling for his head, denounced him for sleeping, he complained how cruel it was to be denied a solace which other criminals so often enjoyed—that of having a night's rest before their execution. And when a dull prosy speaker made a similar charge, he retorted that it was somewhat unjust in the gentleman to blame him for taking the remedy which he himself had been so considerate as to administer. Alderman Sawbridge having accompanied the presentation of a petition from Billingsgate with an invective of more than ordinary coarseness, Lord North began his reply in the following

words: 'I cannot deny that the hon. alderman speaks not only the sentiments but the very language of his constituents.'

Lord Chatham properly belongs to the preceding generation. The chief illustrations of Lord North's era were William Pitt, Charles James Fox, Sheridan, and Burke, *magis pares quam similes*: indeed, it would be difficult to name four men of nearly equal eminence presenting so many points of contrast. Pitt was a born orator. Directly after his maiden speech, some one said, 'Pitt will be one of the first men in Parliament.' 'He is so already,' answered Fox. It was by slow degrees that Fox himself attained his unrivalled excellence as a debater, and he attained it at the expense of his audience. 'During five whole sessions,' he used to say, 'I spoke every night but one; and I regret that I did not speak on that night too.'

Pitt's style was stately, sonorous, full to abundance, smooth and regular in its flow: Fox's free to carelessness, rapid, rushing, turbid, broken, but overwhelming in its swell. Pitt never sank below his ordinary level, never paused in his declamation, never hesitated for a word: if interrupted by a remark or incident, he disposed of it parenthetically, and held on the even and lofty tenor of his way. Fox was desultory and ineffective till he warmed: he did best when he was provoked or excited: he required the kindling impulse, the explosive spark: he might be compared to the rock in Horeb before it was struck. He began his celebrated speech on the Westminster scrutiny by saying that 'far from expecting any indulgence, he could scarcely hope for fair justice from the House.' This raised a cry of order, and gave him occasion for repeating and justifying his obnoxious words in a succession of telling sentences which went far towards making the fortune of the speech. Mr. T. Grenville told Rogers, 'His (Fox's) speeches were full

of repetitions: he used to say that it was necessary to hammer it into them; but I rather think he could not do otherwise.' His carefully prepared speech (of which he corrected the report) in honour of the Duke of Bedford, may pair off with Lord Chatham's eulogy of Wolfe.

'Magna eloquentia, sicut flamma, materiâ alitur, et motibus excitatur, et urendo clarescit.' This passage from the dialogue of Tacitus 'De Oratoribus' was quoted in Pitt's presence and declared to be untranslatable, on which he immediately replied: 'No, I should translate it thus:—"It is with eloquence as with a flame. It requires fuel to feed it, motion to excite it, and it brightens as it burns."' This passage (which Pitt has rather paraphrased than translated), whilst exactly describing the eloquence of Fox, is only partially applicable to his own; for he brought his own fuel: he stood in no need of adventitious excitement; and the same lambent flame burnt clearly and equably from the exordium of his best speeches to the close. The best in all probability of his speeches (says Lord Brougham) is that upon the Peace of 1783 and the Coalition, when he closed his magnificent peroration by that noble yet simple figure: 'and if this inauspicious union be not already consummated, in the name of my country *I forbid the banns.*'

In the first place, the noble and learned lord has weakened the passage, which runs thus: 'If, however, the baneful alliance is not already formed, if this ill-omened marriage is not already solemnized, I know a just and lawful impediment, and, in the name of the public safety, I here forbid the banns.' In the second place, it is divided by three pages of the report from the peroration, which ends with a no less celebrated passage. After remarking that no vote of the House could deprive him of the consciousness of having done his duty, he said:

'And with this consolation, the loss of power, Sir, and the loss of fortune, though I affect not to despise them, I hope I soon shall be able to forget:

'Laudo manentem: si celeres quatit
Pennas, resigno quæ dedit—
. . probamque
Pauperiem sine dote quæro.'

'Why did he omit *et me virtute meâ involvo*?' eagerly asked a young man, afterwards a distinguished member of Opposition, of Bishop Tomline, who was under the gallery during the delivery of this speech—'an omission,' adds the Bishop, 'generally considered as marking the modesty and good sense of Mr. Pitt.'[1]

The same quotation was appropriately introduced by Canning. After beginning *Laudo manentem*, he went on, 'or to adopt the more beautiful paraphrase of Dryden:—

'I can enjoy her while she's kind,
But when she dances in the wind,
And shakes her wings and will not stay,
I puff the prostitute away.'

To give another instance in which Canning used the same quotation as Pitt—

'Stetimus tela aspera contra
Contulimusque manus: experto credite quantus
In clipeum assurgat, quo turbine torqueat hastam.'

This was applied to Fox by Pitt, by Canning to Brougham, and by Palmerston to Stanley. Indeed, it is one of the stock quotations which were constantly recurring, like

'Quis tulerit Gracchos de seditione querentes?'

The altered constitution of the House since 1832,

[1] It was just before this speech (not before that on the Slave Trade) that Pitt was vomiting. The incident is thus recorded in Wilberforce's Diary:—'Pitt's famous speech . . . . Stomach disordered, and actually holding Solomon's porch door open with one hand whilst vomiting during Fox's speech, to which he was to reply.' Solomon's porch was the portico behind the old House of Commons.

and still more, we fear, since 1867, has been in no respect more marked than in the absence of that familiarity with the Latin classics, which renders it comparatively dead to quotations or illustrations drawn from them. The time is gone when a false quantity in a man was much the same thing as a *faux pas* in a woman. Ignorance of more important matters then went for little or nothing. When Sir Robert Walpole was accused in the House of attempting to revive the worst practices of Empson and Dudley, he turned to Sir Philip Yorke, and asked who Empson and Dudley were. He was not ashamed of this; but he was sorely nettled by Pulteney's exulting correction of his Latin. The late Lord Derby carried off with a laugh his mistake, during the discussion of the Corn Laws, about Tamboul; but Lord Clarendon, with all his varied knowledge, high cultivation and accomplishment, was obviously piqued when, as ill luck would have it, in a debate on public schools in the Lords with a numerous attendance of head-masters below the Bar, he slipped into a false quantity by the transposition of a word:

'Sunt bona, sunt mediocria, sunt plūra măla.'

'*Măla plūra*,' maliciously insinuated Lord Derby in an audible aside; and by a common instinct up went the right hands of the head-masters in fancied application of the birch. Lord Clarendon's misfortune lay in his audience. In the House of Commons neither felicity nor infelicity of this sort tells upon or is noticed by the majority. We remember the 'a phenomena' of a metropolitan member raising only a partial titter; and when general effect is the object, it is hardly safe to go beyond Virgil and Horace, if so far.

A county member, Sir William Bagot, rose whilst Burke was speaking, under an impression that he had done; and on Burke's angrily complaining of the inter-

ruption, apologised for it on the ground of country habits:

> 'Rusticus expectat dum defluat amnis; at ille
> Labitur, et labetur in omne volubilis ævum.'

Pitt's mind was so thoroughly imbued with classical literature, that it colours his speeches like the shifting, varying, yet constantly prevalent hue in shot-silk. Thus, in his great speech on the Slave Trade, after expressing a fervent hope that even 'Africa, though last of all the quarters of the globe, shall enjoy at length, in the evening of her days, those blessings which have descended so plentifully upon us in a much earlier period of the world—

> 'Nos . . . . primus equis Oriens afflavit anhelis;
> Illic sera rubens accendit lumina vesper.'

'I have heard it (says Lord Stanhope) related by some who at that time were members of Parliament, that the first beams of the rising sun shot through the windows of the House in the midst of this final passage, and seemed, as Pitt looked upwards, to suggest to him without premeditation the eloquent simile and the noble Latin lines with which he concluded.'

Curran was struggling for an illustration of his client's innocence. 'It is as clear as' (at this moment the sun shone into the court)—'clear as yonder sunbeam that now bursts upon us with its splendid coruscations.' An equally effective use was made by Patrick Henry of a storm which broke upon the building in which the Convention was sitting when he was in the very act of appealing to 'those celestial beings who are hovering over the scene, and waiting with anxiety for a decision which involves the happiness or misery of more than half the human race.'

The dependence of oratory on physical requisites—on voice, manner, figure, gesture—was never more strikingly exemplified than by Burke. Delivery apart,

he was indisputably the greatest of modern orators, and the one who will best stand a comparison with the ancient masters of the art. There is no variety of merit—merit of the highest order—which may not be found in his printed speeches on India and America; nay, which is not comprised in two of them, that on American taxation in April, 1774, and that on the Nabob of Arcot's debts: exuberant fancy, rich imagery, wide views, deep thoughts, beauty and force of diction, vivid description, and (what Hume calls the distinctive features of Grecian eloquence) 'disdain, anger, boldness, freedom, involved in a continued stream of argument.' The beauties of these consummate orations must be familiar to every cultivated reader, who has only to suppose them delivered by Bolingbroke, Chatham, or the silver-tongued Murray, to have before him the *beau idéal*, the finest possible conception, of oratory. To strip Burke of his so-called redundancies under the notion of their overlaying the sense, would be like stripping a tree of its blossoms and foliage, with the view of bringing out the massive roundness of the trunk. Take the passage in which he expands the simple image of the Greek:—

'Having terminated his disputes with every enemy and every rival, who buried their mutual animosities in their common detestation against the creditors of the Nabob of Arcot, he (Hyder Ali) drew from every quarter whatever a savage ferocity could add to his new rudiments in the arts of destruction; and compounding all the materials of fury, havoc, and desolation into one black cloud, he hung for a while on the declivity of the mountains. Whilst the authors of all these evils were idly and stupidly gazing on this menacing meteor, which darkened all their horizon, it suddenly burst, and poured down the whole of its contents upon the plains of the Carnatic. Then ensued a scene of woe, the like of which no eye had seen, no heart conceived, and which no tongue can adequately tell.'

Surely this is an immeasureable improvement, at

least for the English House of Commons, on the 'like a cloud' (ὥσπερ νέφος) of Demosthenes. Lord Stanhope sufficiently accounts for the sole deficiency in his excellent 'Life of Pitt,' the paucity of extracts from the speeches, by the inferiority of the reporting of the period. Burke's greatest speeches were published with the advantage of his own correction and revision, but although carefully meditated, they were not composed beforehand, and some of the happiest bursts were thrown off on the spur of the occasion. A preceding speaker, Lord Carmarthen, had argued that the Americans, being our children, were guilty of rebellion against their parents, and that Manchester, not being represented, had as much right to complain as the colonies. Burke replied:

'True, they are our children, but when children ask for bread, shall we give them a stone? When they wish to assimilate to their parents, and to reflect with a true filial resemblance the beauteous countenance of British liberty, are we to turn towards them the shameful parts of our constitution? Are we to give them our weakness for their strength?—Our opprobrium for their glory?—And the slough of slavery, which we are not able to shake off, to serve them for their freedom?'

It was during the delivery of this speech that Lord John Townshend involuntarily exclaimed, 'Good God! what a man this is! how could he acquire such transcendent powers?' Nor is there any reason to suppose that he did not frequently command the rapt attention of his audience. He acquired the name of the Dinner Bell, from his habit of speaking too often and too long, and losing all sense of the relative importance of great and small subjects from excitability. His want of delicate taste, too, fully bears out the criticism of Wilkes, who, recalling what was said of Apelles' Venus, that her flesh seemed as if she had fed on roses, said of

Burke, 'his oratory would sometimes make one suspect that he eats potatoes and drinks whisky.'

Lord Byron maintained that whatever Sheridan had done or chosen to do was always the best of its kind: 'to crown all, he delivered the very best oration (the famous Begum speech) ever conceived or heard in this country.' Burke, Fox, Pitt, Windham, Wilberforce, all spoke of it in the same unqualified terms of eulogy; and within twenty-four hours of the delivery Sheridan was offered a thousand pounds for the copyright if he would correct it for the press. That he refused, was probably fortunate for his fame. The most ambitious passages, which were carefully reported—the one on Filial Piety, and the one beginning, 'O faith! O justice!'—read like laboured efforts to gild and elevate commonplace. There are parts in which the author of 'The School for Scandal' stands confessed. For example:—

'He remembered to have heard an honourable and learned gentleman (Mr. Dundas) remark, that there was something in the frame and constitution of the Company which extended the sordid principles of their origin over all their successive operations; connecting with their civil policy, and even with their boldest achievements, the meanness of a pedlar and the profligacy of pirates—alike in the political and military line, could be observed auctioneering ambassadors and trading generals;—and thus we saw a revolution brought about by affidavits; an army employed in executing an arrest; a town besieged on a note of hand; a prince dethroned for the balance of an account. Thus it was, they exhibited a government which united the mock majesty of a bloody sceptre, and the little traffic of a merchant's counting-house, wielding a truncheon with one hand, and picking a pocket with the other.'

His parliamentary reputation could hardly have been maintained by his set speeches, although he devoted infinite pains to the preparation of them. Where he shone pre-eminent was in wit and humour. Pitt

clearly got the worst of it when, by a contemptuous reference to the theatre, he provoked the comparison of the Angry Boy in the 'Alchymist;' and this was far from the only instance when Sheridan's light artillery opened with effect after the more powerful guns of his adversary had been ill-directed or missed fire.

It will be found most convenient to divide the Palmerstonian epoch or cycle into three: taking Canning, Brougham, and Plunket for the first; the late Sir Robert Peel, the late Lord Derby, and Sheil for the second; Mr. Disraeli, Mr. Bright, and Mr. Gladstone for the third. Of the first of these triumvirates, we can say little or nothing that has not been said already and very recently. Almost the only question touching them that has not been exhaustively treated, is this: will they bear a comparison with the illustrations of the Walpole and North cycles? Do they show any falling off in form or substance, in declamation or argument, in brilliancy or force?

Plunket was never surpassed as a debater. Equal in cogency, he was superior in sustained closeness of reasoning to Fox. He often rose without effort to the loftiest heights of oratory. It is sufficient to refer to his Union speeches, to his speech on Catholic Emancipation in 1813, and his reply to Lord Lyndhurst in 1825.[1]

Brougham's greatest orations are models of magnificent invective, fierce irony, and fervid argumentation; in which the passions and the reason are alternately or simultaneously addressed. They are streams of burning lava, scorching and destroying whatever comes across them in their course. To the many familiar examples, Lord Russell adds Brougham's speech on the conduct of the Continental Powers towards Spain, terming it

[1] See the 'Essay on the Lord Chancellors of Ireland,' for specimens of Plunket's eloquence and wit. His fame might rest on his speeches in the English Parliament. Grattan's could not. Grattan properly belongs to that constellation of Irish orators that flourished during the last quarter of the eighteenth century.

'certainly one of his brightest flights.' The allusion to the protest of the Russian Minister at Madrid, who had declared with horror that blood had been shed in the Royal Palace, was at once (remarks Lord Russell) a withering invective and a just condemnation of despotism. 'If I had been one of the counsellors of the Emperor,' he said, 'the last subject I would have advised my master to touch upon would have been that of blood shed in the Royal Palace.' At the epoch of the Emperor's coronation, a lady, writing from St. Petersburg, had described the ceremony in these terms: 'The Emperor entered the church preceded by the assassins of his grandfather, surrounded by the assassins of his father, and followed by his own.'

Canning was not equal in declamatory power to Pitt, in debating power to Fox, or in wit to Sheridan: he wanted the reasoning powers of Plunket, as well as the tremendous energy, the all-embracing capacity, of Brougham. But from the meridian of his career to its untimely end, he was, by common consent, the most eloquent, most accomplished, most popular, of contemporary speakers; and his speeches abound in passages which we are disposed to name as the most finished specimens of spoken rhetoric in our tongue. Thus, in supporting the vote of thanks to the Duke (then Marquis) of Wellington for the victory of Vittoria—

'How was their prospect changed! In those countries where, at most, a short struggle had been terminated by a result disastrous to their wishes, if not altogether closing in despair, they had now to contemplate a very different aspect of affairs. Germany crouched no longer trembling at the feet of the tyrant, but maintained a balanced contest. The mighty deluge by which the Continent had been overwhelmed is subsiding. The limits of nations are again visible, and the spires and turrets of ancient establishments are beginning to reappear above the subsiding waves.'

Or in the speech at Plymouth, in 1823, before the invention of ironclads:—

'The resources created by peace are means of war. In cherishing those resources, we but accumulate those means. Our present repose is no more a proof of inability to act, than the state of inertness and inactivity in which I have seen those mighty masses that float in the waters above your town, is a proof that they are devoid of strength and incapable of being fitted out for action. You well know, gentlemen, how soon one of those stupendous masses now reposing on their shadows in perfect stillness—how soon, upon any call of patriotism or of necessity, it would assume the likeness of an animated thing, instinct with life and motion—how soon it would ruffle, as it were, its swelling plumage—how quickly would it put forth all its beauty and its bravery, collect its scattered elements of strength, and awaken its dormant thunder. Such as is one of those magnificent machines when springing from inaction into a display of its might—such is England herself, while apparently passive and motionless she silently concentrates the power to be put forth on an adequate occasion.'

Another striking example is his reply to the speaker who eulogised Pitt for a temporary departure from his principles:

'Such perverse worship is like the idolatry of barbarous nations, who can see the noonday splendour of the sun without emotion, but, when he is in eclipse, come forward with their hymns and cymbals to adore him. And thus there are those who venerate Mr. Pitt less in the full meridian of his glory than under his partial obscurations, and gaze upon him with the fondest adoration when he has accidentally ceased to shine.'

The specimen Sir Henry Bulwer (Lord Dalling) gives of his humour (the sketch of Lord Nugent and his equipment) is confessedly open to the objection of being too laboured and too long. One of his happiest hits was the comparison of Brougham to Dennis claiming the thunder; from which Brougham did not recover for some weeks.

It was John Wilson in 'Blackwood,' we believe, who

at Canning's death said or wrote:—'There died George Canning, the last of the rhetoricians.' Nothing of the kind. The rhetorical spirit has survived and transmigrated. It animated the insignificant figure, it lighted up the intelligent eye, it swelled the shrill voice, of Sheil.

If to wield at will the fierce democracy be the highest triumph of oratory, O'Connell was the first orator of his generation; but the scene of his glory was the public meeting. It was as the Irish Rienzi, as the representative of Roman Catholic Ireland, that he entered the House of Commons; and the position he held in it was principally won without its walls.

> 'Pass by his faults, his art be here allowed—
> Mighty as Chatham, give him but a crowd;
> Hear him in Senates, second-rate at best,
> Clear in a statement, happy in a jest.'

Sheil, distrusted by the 'tail' and discredited by their chief (as the affair of 'Who's the Traitor?' proves) won his way to the front by his rhetoric, and a few specimens will show that it was of the finest quality in its line. Lord Lyndhurst, adopting the very language of O'Connell, had spoken of the Irish as 'aliens in blood, language, and religion.' He was under the gallery on the peers' bench on February 22, 1837, during the debate on the Irish Municipal Bill, when Sheil caught up and commented on the phrase:

'Aliens! good God! was Arthur, Duke of Wellington, in the House of Lords, and did he not start up and exclaim, "Hold! I have seen the aliens do their duty?" "The battles, sieges, fortunes he has passed," should have come back upon him. . . . Whose were the arms that drove your bayonets at Vimeira through the phalanxes that never reeled in the shock of war before? What desperate valour climbed the steeps and filled the moats at Badajoz? All his victories should have rushed and crowded back upon his memory —Vimeira, Badajoz, Salamanca, Albuera, Toulouse, and, last of all, the greatest ——. Tell me, for you were there

—I appeal to the gallant soldier before me (Sir Henry Hardinge), from whose opinions I differ, but who bears, I know, a generous heart in an intrepid breast;—tell me, for you must needs remember—on that day when the destinies of mankind were trembling in the balance—while death fell in showers—when the artillery of France was levelled with a precision of the most deadly science—when her legions, incited by the voice and inspired by the example of their mighty leader, rushed again and again to the onset—tell me if, for an instant, when to hesitate for an instant was to be lost, the "aliens" blenched? And when at length the moment for the last and decisive movement had arrived, and the valour which had so long been wisely checked, was at last let loose—when, with words familiar, but immortal, the great captain commanded the great assault—tell me, if Catholic Ireland, with less heroic valour than the natives of this your own glorious country, precipitated herself upon the foe? The blood of England, Scotland, and of Ireland, flowed in the same stream, and drenched the same field. When the chill morning dawned, their dead lay cold and stark together;—in the same deep pit their bodies were deposited—the green corn of spring is now breaking from their commingled dust—the dew falls from heaven upon their union in the grave. Partakers in every peril—in the glory shall we not be permitted to participate; and shall we be told, as a requital, that we are estranged from the noble country for whose salvation our life-blood was poured out?'

The wave of his hand towards the peers' bench was the signal for vociferous cheering: still more spirit-stirring was the appeal to Sir Henry Hardinge; and the most enthusiastic applause burst forth at the conclusion.

There was not a worn-out or exhausted topic that Sheil could not freshen and adorn; as that of a provision for the Roman Catholic clergy:—

'The Catholics of Ireland know that if their clergy were endowed with the wealth of the establishment, they would become a profligate corporation, pampered with luxury, swelling with sacerdotal pride, and presenting in their lives a monstrous contrast with that simplicity and that poverty of which they are now as well the practisers as the teachers.

They know that, in place of being, as they now are, the indefatigable instructors of the peasantry, their consolers in affliction, their resource in calamity, their preceptors and their models in religion, their visitors in sickness, and their companions at the bed of death; they would become equally insolent to the humble, and sycophantic to the great—flatterers at the noble's table and extortioners in the poor man's hovel: slaves in politics, and tyrants in demeanour: who from the porticoes of palaces would give their instructions in humility; who from the banquets of patricians would prescribe their lessons in abstinence; and from the primrose path of dalliance point out the steep and thorny way to heaven.'

This covert attack upon the Church, whom Burke exhorts to raise her mitred head in palaces, may be compared with the fell onslaught of Brougham in his defence of Ambrose Williams.

Stanley's (the late Lord Derby's) prominent features are accurately hit off in 'The New Timon:'—

> 'The brilliant chief irregularly great,
> Frank, haughty, rash– the Rupert of Debate!
> Nor gout, nor toil, his freshness can destroy,
> And time still leaves all Eton in the boy.
> . . . . . .
> Yet who not listens with delighted smile
> To the pure Saxon of that silver style?'

The epithet 'Rupert of Debate,' if not originated, was interpreted by Mr. Disraeli: 'His charge is irresistible, but when he has driven the force directly opposed to him off the field, he returns to find his camp in the possession of the enemy.' Macaulay said of him that his knowledge of the science of parliamentary defence resembled an instinct. 'The year 1833 was in my opinion,' observes Lord Russell, 'the most distinguished and the most memorable of Lord Derby's political career.' It was in 1833, after Lord Althorp had brought in the Irish Coercion Bill, that Stanley, finding no impression had been made, turned to Lord Russell, and said: 'I meant not to have spoken till to-morrow night, but I find I

must speak to-night.' He took Lord Althorp's box of official papers, and went upstairs to a room where he could look them over quietly. After the debate had proceeded for two or three hours longer, with no change of temper in the House, he rose and laid before them so complete and appalling a picture of the condition of Ireland, that they became deeply interested :—

'When (says Lord Russell) he had produced a thrilling effect by these descriptions, he turned upon O'Connell, who led the opposition to the measure, and who seemed a short time before about to achieve a triumph in favour of sedition and anarchy. He recalled to the recollection of the House of Commons that, at a recent public meeting, O'Connell had spoken of the House of Commons as 658 scoundrels. In a tempest of scorn and indignation, he excited the anger of the men thus designated against the author of the calumny. The House, which two hours before seemed about to yield to the great agitator, was now almost ready to tear him to pieces. In the midst of the storm which his eloquence had raised he sat down, having achieved one of the greatest triumphs of eloquence ever won in a popular assembly by the powers of oratory.'

Turning to the report of this speech, we find that the effect was produced by extracts and letters pointed and applied with great declamatory force. Stanley never thought of shining, and it may be doubted whether he ever prepared any of the most telling passages in his speeches. His luminous points were sparks from a working engine, not fireworks thrown up for display. He was a desperately hard hitter, as both Sheil and O'Connell (who invented the epithet of Scorpion Stanley) found to their cost. It was O'Connell, also, who, in ridicule of the tenuity of Stanley's personal following after quitting the Whigs, made the well-known quotation :—

> 'Thus down thy hill, romantic Ashbourne, glides
> The Derby Dilly carrying *six* insides.'[1]

[1] 'The Anti-Jacobin.' It is *three* in the original.

The reins of the Derby Dilly were soon afterwards in the hands of Sir Robert Peel, and it is no slight testimony to his reputation and position that such men as Stanley and Graham were content to act under him. 'And, in truth, Sir Robert Peel is a remarkable man, confessedly a *puissance* in himself, confessedly the leading member of the representative, yes, even of your reformed assembly. It is a current mistake in the provinces to suppose that he is rather sensible than eloquent. If to persuade, to bias, to soothe, to command the feelings, the taste, the opinions of an audience often diametrically opposed to his views, if this be eloquence, which I, a plain man, take it to be, then Sir Robert Peel is among the most eloquent of men.'[1]

What people are wont to call eloquence is that which gives pleasure or excites emotion independently of the subject or the aim; and in following Sir Robert Peel the mind was exclusively bent on the train of reasoning, the lucidity of statement, or the comprehensiveness of view. To call him a parliamentary middle-man was preposterous. He was the greatest member of Parliament, bred in and formed by it, that the House of Commons had known since Walpole. Its forms, its ways, its temper, its opinions, were familiar to him. He had every description of knowledge that could be made available in debate, the business-like habits which please men of business, and the high cultivation by which the fastidious are conciliated. He was anything but a dry prosaic speaker. There are touches of sensibility in his speeches that deepen into genuine pathos, of conscious self-vindicating worth that rise to dignity, of concentrated scorn that explodes to the dismay and confusion of the scorner, as in the speech in which, as descriptive of his own mental sufferings, he introduced the fine lines of Dryden:—

[1] 'England and the English.'

'Tis said with ease; but, oh! how hardly tried—
By haughty souls to human honour tied—
Oh! sharp convulsive pangs of agonizing pride.' [1]

Or the scornful defiance of Cobbett (who had moved to strike his name off the list of the Privy Council), concluding with a grand passage from Cowley. But he shone where such a man would be least expected to shine, in humour, which was one of his most effective weapons in the unequal fight which he waged with the Opposition during his short administration of 1834. He also excelled in quiet sarcasm. In the debate on Commercial Distress (Dec. 3rd, 1847), Alderman Reynolds, one of the members for Dublin, had asked: 'Did not everybody know that the profit and advantage of banking consisted very much in trading on your credit in contradistinction to your capital?' In the course of the masterly reply with which Peel closed the debate, he said:—

'I have the greatest respect for bankers in general and Irish bankers in particular, and among Irish bankers, I well know the position enjoyed by the honourable gentleman. Now, with all the respect to which he is entitled, and with all suavity and courtesy, I will tell him, that, in his banking capacity, I would rather have his capital than his credit.'

When this speech was delivered, the Protectionist fury against him was at its height; and the Bank Charter Act, which he upheld, was especially obnoxious

[1] Sir Lawrence Peel, in his able and discriminating 'Sketch' of the Life of his distinguished relative, thinks it necessary to palliate a supposed charge of poverty of thought based on his habit of clothing his thoughts in the language of other men. But surely quotations such as his imply rather richness than poverty of mind; and the charge might be brought with equal plausibility against most of the great modern orators. It is much to be regretted that the 'Memoirs of Sir Robert Peel' (of which three Parts have been published), by the trustees of his papers, Earl Stanhope and Mr. Cardwell, are confined to correspondence and dry matters of fact. We have ample proof how entertaining Earl Stanhope can make history or biography; and we know no one who has a choicer collection of political anecdotes than Mr. Cardwell or relates them better.

to the mercantile interest. Yet when he sat down, an adjournment was moved on the ground taken by Pitt in moving an adjournment after Sheridan's Begum speech: that the House was not in a state to vote dispassionately. Sir William Heathcote turned to a friend and colleague of Peel's (Mr Cardwell) and said: 'It is of no use for any of us to talk. No one else can approach him.' The next day the friend repeated this expression to Peel. He looked astonished and replied: 'You surprise me very much: you know I left out nearly everything I meant to say.'

In 1848 Feargus O'Connor was charged in the House with being a Republican. He denied it, and said he did not care whether the Queen or the Devil was on the throne. Peel replied: 'When the honourable gentleman sees the sovereign of his choice on the throne of these realms, I hope he'll enjoy, and I'm sure he'll deserve, the confidence of the crown.'

Sheil had learnt and forgotten the exordium of a speech which began with the word 'necessity.' This word he had repeated three times, when Sir R. Peel broke in—'is not *always* the mother of invention.'

The most formidable competitor for power whom Peel had to encounter during his leadership of the Conservative party, was Lord John (Earl) Russell: a statesman who has played too important a part in the constitutional history of England to be passed over: who, moreover, became as good a speaker as it was well possible to become with hardly any of the physical requisites, by high spirit, high training, clearness and depth of view, thought, feeling, knowledge, and accomplishment. His arrival at the goal marked out for him in early youth by one poet, has been hailed and celebrated by another:

> 'With an eloquence—not like those rills from a height
> Which sparkle and foam and in vapour are o'er,
> But a current that works out its way into light,
> Through the filtering recesses of thought and of lore.

'Thus gifted, thou never canst sleep in the shade:
If the stirrings of genius, the music of fame,
And the charms of thy cause have not power to persuade,
Yet think how to freedom thou'rt pledged by thy name!'

These are two of some spirited stanzas by Moore, headed, 'Remonstrance: after a conversation with Lord John Russell, in which he had intimated some idea of giving up all political pursuits.' The following verses form part of his lordship's portrait in 'The New Timon:'—

'But see our statesman when the steam is on,
And languid Johnny glows to glorious John!
When Hampden's thought, by Falkland's muses drest,
Lights the pale cheek and swells the generous breast;
When the pent heat expands the quickening soul,
And foremost in the race the wheels of genius roll!'

He particularly excelled in a comprehensive reply at the end of an important debate: and one of the most telling retorts ever uttered in either House was his, when Sir Francis Burdett, after turning Tory and becoming a member of the Carlton Club, thought proper to sneer at 'the cant of patriotism:'

'I quite agree with the honourable baronet that the cant of patriotism is a bad thing. But I can tell him a worse—the *re*cant of patriotism—which I will gladly go along with him in reprobating whenever he shows me an example of it.'

It has always seemed unaccountable to us that Peel, who had joined battle, without losing heart or ground, with such antagonists as Brougham, Canning, Stanley, and Lord Russell, should have quailed before Mr. Disraeli; or, if quailed be too strong a term, should have allowed himself to be so ruffled and annoyed. *Contempsi Catilinæ gladios: non pertimescam tuos.* He was so irritated on the night of the third reading of the Corn-Law Bill that he came after the debate to Lord Lincoln (the late Duke of Newcastle) at Whitehall Place, and insisted on his carrying a hostile message to Mr. Disraeli. On Lord Lincoln's positive refusal,

Sir Robert was going off in search of another second, and was with difficulty driven from his purpose by the threat of an application to a magistrate. The most plausible explanation is that he was maddened by the clamorous cheers of his quondam friends and followers:

'Non me tua fervida terrent
Dicta, ferox: Dii me terrent—'

the *Dii* being understood in the theatrical sense: the gods that thunder their applause or censure from the gallery. It must be remembered also that there was twice over some foundation for the charge so pointedly levelled at him, of having acted like the Turkish admiral who steered the fleet under his command straight into the harbour of the enemy; and that Mr. Disraeli was in his happiest vein. This was the night (May 15, 1846) when he declared Peel's life to be 'one great appropriation clause,' termed the Treasury Bench 'political pedlars that bought their party in the cheapest market and sold us in the dearest;' and compared the conversion of the Peelites to that of the Saxons by Charlemagne, 'who, according to the chronicle, were converted in battalions and baptized in platoons.'

Sheil's mode of accounting for Mr. Disraeli's want of spirit and freshness after Peel's death is well known. He compared him to a dissecting surgeon or anatomist without a corpse. His best speeches—and two or three of them are of rare excellence—were those which he spoke when, as leader of the young England party, he first opened the trenches against Peel. His later and more elaborate speeches are deficient in substance, soundness, spontaneity and flow. They neither convince nor move. As Cicero says of Epicurus, 'Nil magnificum, nil generosum sapit.' They do not make his hearers wiser or better; nor would he gain by it if they did. It is only when his fertile fancy supplies

an allusive pleasantry, or when he can indulge his genius for sarcasm, that he brightens up or seems at home. Rogers said of Lord Aberdeen's (the Premier) dancing, when obliged to stand up with an ambassadress, that he danced as if he was hired for the purpose and was not sure of being paid. Mr. Disraeli has commonly spoken since 1846 as if he was under an engagement to do a given amount of work for his party, and was not sure of their approval when he had completed it.

What his biographer deems the most presentable bit of his rhetoric is the warning to the Manchester School: 'that there is no reason why they should form an exception to that which history has mournfully recorded; why they, too, should not fade like the Tyrian dye, and moulder like the Venetian palaces.' But surely some happier passages might be discovered by those who cared to look for them. He made a capital hit in his speech at Manchester:

'As I sat opposite the Treasury Bench, the Ministers reminded me of one of those marine landscapes not very unusual on the coasts of South America. You behold a range of exhausted volcanoes. Not a flame flickers on a single pallid crest. But the situation is still dangerous. There are occasional earthquakes, and ever and anon the dark rumbling of the sea.'

'Genuine Saxon, by the soul of Hengist!' was the exulting shout of Cedric on hearing the name of a Saxon knight who had been victor in the lists. 'Genuine Saxon!' will be the exclamation of every critical listener to Mr. Bright. His look, his tone, his choice of words and illustrations, his stubborn independence, his boldness, his pugnacity, are all redolent of race. A Foxite adduced Pitt's preference of Latin compounds as an all-sufficient proof of habitual ambiguity. Apply a similar test to Mr. Bright and no further proof will be needed of his straightforwardness. His diction is

drawn exclusively from the pure wells of English undefiled. Milton and the Bible are his unceasing study. There was a time when it was rare to find him without 'Paradise Lost' in his hand or his pocket. The use of scriptural imagery is a marked feature of his orations, and no imagery can be more appropriately employed to illustrate his views; for Mr. Bright, in all his grand efforts, rises far above the loaded unwholesome atmosphere of party politics into the purer air and brighter skies of patriotism and philanthropy. We may differ about his means or measures, but no one can differ about the aim when he puts forth his strength to raise Ireland or India in the scale of civilisation, to mitigate the evils of war, or to promote the spread of toleration and Christian charity throughout the world. He wound up a speech on Ireland in these words:—

'The noble Lord (Palmerston), towards the conclusion of his speech, spoke of the cloud which rests at present over Ireland. It is a dark and heavy cloud, and its darkness extends over the feelings of men in all parts of the British Empire. But there is a consolation which we may all take to ourselves. An inspired king, and bard, and prophet, has left us words which are not only the expression of a fact, but which we may take as the utterance of a prophecy. He says, "To the upright there ariseth light in the darkness." Let us try in this matter to be upright. Let us try to be just. That cloud will be dispelled. The dangers which surround us will vanish, and we may yet have the happiness of leaving to our children the heritage of an honourable citizenship in a united and prosperous empire.'

The speech in which he is commonly thought to have reached the culminating point of his oratory, the one to which he himself reverts with most pleasure, is that deprecating a continuance of the Crimean war. The most successful passage was this—

'I do not suppose that your troops are to be beaten in actual conflict with the foe, or that they will be driven into

the sea; but I am certain that many homes in England in which there now exists a fond hope that the distant one may return—many such homes may be rendered desolate when the next mail shall arrive. The angel of death has been abroad throughout the land; you may almost hear the beating of his wings. There is no one, as when the first-born were slain of old, to sprinkle with blood the lintel and the two sideposts of our doors, that he may spare and pass on; he takes his victims from the castle of the noble, the mansion of the wealthy, and the cottage of the poor and the lowly, and it is on behalf of all these classes that I make this solemn appeal.'

Although Mr. Bright is a ready speaker, he is understood (like the great orators of Greece and Rome) to devote much time and labour to the preparation of his orations; which may account for their comparative fewness and brevity. His voice is all that could be desired as an orator, and his delivery is impressive, although so distinct, slow, and calm as to sound more like recitation than declamation, and it is suspected that his more ambitious passages are fairly written out on the paper which he holds with seeming carelessness in his hand.

One of the best specimens of his racy humour is the speech in which he introduced the cave of Adullam, and, in allusion to the alliance between two of the principal occupants, Mr. Lowe and Mr. Horsman, said: 'This party of two reminds me of the Scotch terrier, which was so covered with hair that you could not tell which was the head and which was the tail of it.' His epithets are as adhesive as Mr. Disraeli's; as when he termed that right honourable gentleman the 'mystery man' of his party. There was point as well as quaintness in one of his arguments against the Crimean war:—

'The property-tax is the lever, or the weapon, with which the proprietors of land and houses in this kingdom will have

to support the "integrity and independence" of the Ottoman Empire. Gentlemen, I congratulate you that every man of you has a Turk upon his shoulders.'

His eloquence is (or was) more convincing than persuasive; and the House of Commons for many years rarely went willingly along with him. He defied and confronted, instead of conciliating, an opponent; and when he encountered what he thought prejudices and others might think principles, his massive understanding passed over them like a steam-roller crushing and pulverising stones.

The 'unadorned eloquence' of Richard Cobden, the fellow-labourer of John Bright in the same high mission, has left its indelible mark on British legislation, but the House of Commons was not the arena in which its persuasive and convincing qualities were most triumphantly displayed.

The first place among living competitors for the oratorical crown will be conceded without a dissenting voice to Mr. Gladstone. It is Eclipse first and all the rest nowhere. He may lack Mr. Bright's impressive diction, impressive by its simplicty, or Mr. Disraeli's humour and sarcasm; but he has made ten eminently successful speeches to Mr. Bright's or Mr. Disraeli's one. His foot is ever in the stirrup: his lance is ever in the rest. He throws down the gauntlet to all comers. Right or wrong, he is always real, natural, earnest, unaffected, and unforced. He is a great debater, a great parliamentary speaker: with a shade more imagination, he would be a great orator. Much that we have said of Sir Robert Peel might be repeated of Mr. Gladstone. Inferior to the founder of his school in judgment and self-control, he is superior in moral courage, warmth, range, grasp, fertility, versatility, passion, power. If he has committed mistakes which Peel would not have committed, he has achieved triumphs which Peel could not have achieved. He

can not only persuade and convince senates: he can sway popular assemblies by voice, look, bearing, and moral force, as well as by sonorous periods and ringing words. See him in the cold grey mist of that October afternoon advance to the front of the platform at Blackheath, bareheaded, pale, resolute:—

> 'Now one glance round, now upwards turns his brow,
> Hushed every breath: he rises—mark him now.'

Unluckily every breath was not hushed. From that surging sea of heads and faces arose an angry murmur that presaged a storm. The audience was the reverse of favourable: the reserved seats had been invaded by the populace, including many of the discharged dock-yard labourers; and political emissaries were busy among the crowd. But a love of fair play, stimulated by curiosity, procured him his opportunity. His distinct articulation and finely-toned voice, 'loud as a trumpet with a silver sound,' commanded a wide circle, which widened as he went on: an English audience is more easily won by firmness than by flattery; and such was the influence of his manly self-assertion, combined with a judicious choice of topics, that the heath far and near resounded with plaudits when he wound up by devoting himself, 'according to the measure of his gifts,' to the service of the country and the Queen. In little more than an hour he had recovered his waning popularity and set up his government.

Let us now accompany him to another arena. During several months prior to the introduction of the budget in 1853, the most influential portion of the press, headed by the 'Times,' had bent all their strength to compel a modification of the Income Tax, with a view to lighten the burthen thrown on trades and professions by Schedule D. A strong pressure was put upon Mr. Gladstone, then Chancellor of the Exchequer, to fall in with the current of opinion, which was deemed irresistible. The day before the financial statement, there

was a large dinner company (ministerialists) assembled at Sir William Molesworth's, when a member of the Government came in with a face of dismay to announce that Gladstone was obstinate, and that they should be all out within the week. Such was the general expectation. Within twenty-four hours after the delivery of his speech (April 18) every rational person was obliged to confess that the proposed modification was impracticable; and from that hour to this it has never been seriously entertained or formally proposed again. Another striking instance of the same kind is the revolution he effected in public and parliamentary opinion (May 4, 1863) by his speech against the exemption of charities from Income Tax.

The extreme subtlety of his mind, whilst supplying him with an inexhaustible store of replies and rejoinders, causes him to rely too much on over-refined distinctions and on casuistical modes of reasoning. During Garibaldi's visit to London, it was suggested that a noble and richly jointured widow, who was much about with him, should marry him. To the objection that he had a wife living, the ready answer was, 'Oh, he must get Gladstone to explain her away.' He has also Burke's habit of attaching undue importance to secondary topics. But the same liability to exaggeration which occasionally impairs the effect of a great speech, not unfrequently elevates an ordinary one, and enables him to compel attention to what may really be an important matter, although an impatient or fastidious House may deem it small. The compound householder, whom he rescued from unmerited neglect, is an example.[1]

'And now, gentlemen'—he was speaking at Chester—'shall I say a word to you about the Dee and Mersey

[1] 'Qu'est-ce que c'est que votre "compound householder," dont M. Gladstone parle si souvent?' inquired a foreign lady of distinction. 'Madame, c'est le mari de la femme incomprise,' was the reply.

Railway? That is a great descent, is it not? But I have not the smallest objection to discuss the Dee and Mersey Railway, or any other subject whatever.' In one of the Cattle Plague debates he discussed the dues of the River Weaver with a spirit, a breadth, and a felicity of application, that will associate that river in oratorical reminiscences with the Rhone and the Saone. Another memorable occasion when he elevated a prosaic subject, was in the debate on the Overend and Gurney prosecution. He spoke unexpectedly at about half-past nine, when there was a lax attendance of reporters; and the reports, consequently, conveyed to the outside public only an incomplete impression of his speech.

The most memorable passage of arms between Mr. Gladstone and Mr. Disraeli came off in the debate on the budget (Nov. 1853), when the Derby government was defeated by a majority of nineteen. It had lasted four nights. Mr. Gladstone had not spoken. Sir James Graham and Mr. Sidney Herbert were anxious that he should not speak after Mr. Disraeli, who rose at a late hour. Indeed it was understood that Mr. Disraeli was to close the debate. He fought his losing cause with spirit and dexterity, till (an unusual thing with him), he lost his temper and broke through all bounds of conventional decorum. Strong language may have been justified by the provocation, but he went too far when he told Sir Charles Wood (Lord Halifax) that petulance was not sarcasm, nor insolence invective; and said he viewed Sir James Graham with regard, but not with respect.

The moment he ceased, before he had well time to resume his seat amidst the loud acclamations of his party, Mr. Gladstone bounded to the floor. He was encountered by menacing and derisive cheers: he was twice interrupted by an Irish member making unseemly noises in the gallery. But he was irrepressible: he

stood firm as Guizot uttering his famous '*Oui, j'ai été à Gand.*' 'This speech,' he repeated, 'is one which must be answered, and answered at the moment. The character of England, involved in that of her public men, the character of England is at stake.' After indignantly repelling Mr. Disraeli's charges and invectives, he ended a masterly analysis of the budget by describing it as based on principles against which all true Conservatives stood pledged.

Mr. Gladstone is more Ciceronian than Demosthenic. Amplification, not condensation, is his forte; but he can be fanciful or pithy on occasions: as when in a budget speech he compared his arrival at the part in which the remissions of taxation were to be announced, to the descent into the smiling valleys of Italy after a toilful ascent of the Alps; or when he said that it was the duty of the minister to stand 'like a wall of adamant' between the people and the Crown.

Nor is pathos beyond his range. In the course of his speech on Parliamentary Reform, April 27, 1866, he turned to the Liberal party and said:

'I came amongst you an outcast from those with whom I associated, driven from their ranks, I admit, by no arbitrary act, but by the slow and resistless forces of conviction. I came among you, to make use of the legal phraseology, *in formâ pauperis*. I had nothing to offer you but faithful and honourable service: you received me as Dido received the shipwrecked Æneas:

'. . . ejectum littore, egentem
Excepi—

And I only trust you may not hereafter at any time have to complete the sentence in regard to me:

—et regni, demens! in parte locavi.

You received me with kindness, indulgence, generosity, and I may even say with some measure of your confidence. And the relation between us has assumed such a form that you

can never be my debtors, but that I must be for ever in your debt.'

An old and highly esteemed member of the Liberal party (Mr. Philips, member for Bury) said that the delivery of this passage brought tears into his eyes; and he added: 'I was not ashamed to own it, when I observed that several friends near me were similarly moved.'[1]

We must stop here. The walls of our portrait gallery are covered. We are like the Hanging Committee of the Academy, driven to exclusion by selection; and we shall doubtless be suspected of prejudice or partiality like them. The high claims of the excluded, however, form one among many reasons for looking hopefully to the future, after reverting proudly to the past. There are no rising orators, it is true; nor (as we recently noticed) are there any rising poets, painters, or actors, any rising men of first-rate genius of any kind. Yet England is replete with intellectual life: it must still contain hearts pregnant with celestial fire: and there never existed a more appreciating public; so appreciating, indeed, that in default of real genius, it is often content to put up with counterfeits.

With a rich soil and good seed, why should there be no harvest, or a blighted one? The destiny of the rising generation may be that of Banquo: 'Thou shalt get kings, though thou be none.' If Gray might ennoble his country churchyard with the dust of imaginary departed worthies, why may we not people our senate with the animated forms of coming ones? It is good not to despair of the commonwealth, and we do not despair of it. The scene at St. Paul's on Thanks-

[1] Although the Session of 1873 may not have been favourable to Mr. Gladstone's Government upon the whole, his personal reputation as a parliamentary speaker and statesman has certainly been enhanced by it. Instance upon instance might be cited in which he shone pre-eminent in debating power, as well as in elevation and comprehensiveness of view.

giving Day has indefinitely postponed the arrival of the new Zealander to sketch its ruins. Whatever may become of the Manchester School, British eloquence, statesmanship, patriotism, and loyalty will not fade like the Tyrian dye: the British Houses of Parliament will not moulder like the Venetian palaces; nor (for it all comes to that) have 'the people of this little isle' shown the slightest symptom of abandoning or forfeiting the grand position which the Premier claimed for them at Blackheath, 'among the small and select company of great nations that have stamped their names on the page of history, as gifted with the qualities that mark the leaders of mankind.' This recalls the fine lines of Goldsmith:

> 'Pride in their port, defiance in their eye,
> I see the lords of human kind pass by.'

Have they in any respect degenerated since then?

CURIOSITIES OF GERMAN ARCHIVES.

1. *Aus Vier Jahrhunderten. Mittheilungen aus dem Haupt-Staatsarchive zu Dresden*, von (*Out of Four Centuries. Selections from the Chief State Archives at Dresden.* By) Dr. KARL VON WEBER, *Ministerialrath, Director des Haupt-Staatsarchives.* Two volumes. Leipzig: 1857.
2. *Aus Vier Jahrhunderten, &c. &c.* Neue Folge. 1861.

THE author of this compilation is one of those zealous public functionaries whom it would be both cruel and impolitic to check by Talleyrand's famous injunction against zeal. Public loss as well as private mortification would be the result. Instead of dozing over the miscellaneous and multitudinous heaps of parchments and papers confided to him in 1849 as Director of the State Archives of Saxony, or pocketing occasional fees for extracts, Dr. Karl von Weber set about examining and selecting from them; and from the description he gives of his treasures we should say that few antiquarians have undertaken a more appalling task.

The State Record Office of Dresden, established in 1834, contains (he tells us), besides a great number of original records, about 300,000 reports or documents (Actenstücke) out of the repositories of more than fifty dissolved or extinct provincial jurisdictions, commissions, embassies, &c. It also possesses an inexhaustible mine for history, in the shape of letters to and from members of the ruling family, high officials, and other influential persons. If, for example, in earlier times there died any one directly or indirectly connected with the

local or central administration, it was customary to despatch a commissary to the house of mourning, to take possession of all writings belonging to the State; and if he chanced to be of an anxious turn of mind, he laid hands on all the written paper that met his eye. The sorting and sifting were postponed, or reserved for some superior, by whom the papers were commonly laid aside and forgotten. 'The State Office has inherited in this fashion a vast quantity of private papers, unpaid tailors' bills inclusive, which are now only fit for the paper-mill; but mixed up with them have frequently been found interesting letters and confidential communications concerning events which were kept strictly secret in their day, many which were not even trusted to official reports necessarily circulating through many hands.'

A tailor's bill, paid or unpaid, may be turned to good account by a biographer; witness the curious illustration of the circumstances and habits of Goldsmith drawn by Mr. Forster from the bills of Filby of Fetter Lane, the maker of the famous peach-coloured coat; and many of Macaulay's most striking remarks on characters and events are based on scraps and remnants, which a writer of less discernment would have passed unnoticed on a stall.

When Dr. Weber had completed his selection of materials, the next step was to compound them into a book, 'at the earnest request of friends.' The encouragement given to the first specimen naturally led to a second; and the result is a collection which may often be consulted with advantage, whether the object be to verify a disputed point in history, to throw light on manners, to gratify a taste for the wonderful, or to find new proofs of the old adage that truth is stranger than fiction.

It matters little with which volume or class of subjects we begin. Extracting at random from such a

book is like dipping into the kettle of Camacho. The ladle is pretty sure to bring up something racy and appetising. We alight, for example, on an article headed 'A Journey to Milan in 1571;' an expedition set on foot by Augustus Elector of Saxony, with the laudable object of promoting industrial enterprise. With this view Bartholomew Rabozot and Jacob Dunus, natives of Ticino, were commissioned to institute such inquiries and make such purchases in Italy as might facilitate the establishment of the silk and velvet manufactures in Saxony. The sum to be laid out by them was 5000 florins, with which they purchased thirty-five horses at Frankfort, expecting to realise à handsome profit by reselling them in the South. Unfortunately they got no further than Milan, where religious bigotry put a decisive stop to all hopes of international barter: Milan being at that time an appanage of the Spanish crown, with a Cardinal for governor.

Rabozot, who, on his arrival, was more afraid of horse-stealers than priests, was reposing, booted and spurred, in the stable with his stud, when he was suddenly roused at midnight and carried off to a place of confinement with six of his grooms. Early the next morning he was brought before the Cardinal governor, who handed him over to the tender mercies of the Holy Office. After lying forty-eight hours in a dark cell, he was visited by the Inquisitor and examined as to some fifty heads of doctrine or belief, with a most unreasonable disregard to his own personal faith or means of knowledge. For example: What was the Elector of Saxony's religious creed? Was his highness a Lutheran heretic or not? whether he himself held that belief? to which last question he replied affirmatively. He was next asked whether he attended mass, and on his replying that he had his affairs to look after, they told him that, if he had traded ten years in

their country and neglected the mass, he was a child of Satan. 'Whether he had brought any Lutheran letters or books with him?' 'No.' 'Whether he had eaten flesh at forbidden times?' 'No, for the very sufficient reason that no one there would give him any;' to which they rejoined that there were innkeepers who would give him 'his crop-full of what he asked for.' Secondly, 'Whether he had spoken ill of the priests whom he had met in the streets or elsewhere?' 'No.' 'Whether he had thought evil of them? and what was his opinion of the mass?'

The last question was a poser, and he did his best to evade it by appealing to his former professions, but the inquisitors were not to be put off in this fashion, and they remanded him with the ominous warning that they would find a mode of getting what they wanted out of him. The next day they hung heavy weights on his feet, and told him he must confess or be torn in two, and especially declare whether he deemed the mass good or not. On being lifted from the ground he cried out that he must speak on compulsion, and said that as to his opinion of the mass, he had never tried nor witnessed it, and therefore did not know whether it was good or bad. They then drew him up again, and the chief official gave him many hard words, to which he replied boldly: 'If we were alone together, you would not dare to talk thus, and although I am now in your power, and must suffer all you choose to inflict, the time may come when I shall be notably revenged.' 'By whom?' they scoffingly asked. 'By the Swiss?' 'They would take good care not to meddle. Who would put themselves against the Pope and King Philip, who had upheld the Inquisition?' This last speech was accompanied by an indecent gesture of contempt. They kept him suspended in the air two hours longer, to the best of his reckoning, for he fainted and does not know when he

was let down. He lay sixteen days in prison, much weakened by spitting of blood and fainting fits, before he was permitted to return to his hotel, from whence he at length managed, probably by the connivance of the authorities, to escape across the border and return to lay his complaint before the Elector.

After setting forth his pecuniary losses and bodily sufferings, he petitioned to be remunerated for the former in cash, and to be compensated for the latter by subjecting to the same mode of treatment which he had undergone at Milan, all Milanese or others concerned in the affair who should be apprehended in Saxony or other parts of Germany. He especially prays that, as Milanese may not be found in his highness's dominions, letters might be addressed to the Palatine and Landgraves, requiring them, should the Milanese in question, particularly certain Milanese horse-dealers from Frankfort who were suspected of betraying him, pass through their States, to arrest them bodily with their goods and belongings. The Elector, after vainly trying to obtain satisfaction for his emissary by regular means, issued letters of mark and reprisal authorising Rabozot, 'should he meet with these *or any other* Milanese, to throw them into prison, so that Rabozot's bodily pains and many losses might be made good to him by them.' Whether he was fortunate enough to encounter them, or in what form he retaliated, is not stated in the record.

We are wont to laugh at the blundering indignation of the Irishman who knocked a man down in Covent Garden because he himself had been knocked down by another in Drury Lane; yet it is hardly a caricature of the received mode of obtaining redress for real or fancied injuries over a large part of Europe little more than a century ago.[1] The heirs of Urban Ulrich, a

[1] Götz von Berlichingen (Goethe's hero) pushed matters a step further: 'To his strong arm the persecuted looked for protection. A tailor owes

Saxon, had a claim of 600 florins on the town of Eisleben, which remained unpaid after repeated demands. Thereupon the Elector of Saxony issued a command to the mayor of Leipzig to summon before him the burgesses and traders of Eisleben attending the Christmas fair, lay the matter in detail before them, so that they might communicate it to their fellow-townsmen, and notify to them that, if the debt was not discharged by the ensuing Easter fair, disagreeable consequences might ensue. This intimation proving fruitless, the mayor, on the eve of the Easter fair, was further commissioned to take summary measures against the bodies, goods, and belongings to all Eislebeners whom he should encounter within or without the fair, and so compel payment of the debt.

It is a common belief that local and family feuds were carried to the highest and most mischievous pitch in Corsica, but Dr. Weber heaps case upon case to show that German revenge frequently led to results as disastrous and widespread as the *vendetta*; nor was the assumed privilege of private war confined to the noble or the great. Anthony Birnstiel, a carrier by trade, was indebted to Christopher Schnee, who, not choosing to rely on the uncertain and tedious process of the law, stopped Birnstiel's team in the highway and carried off the horses as a pledge. Failing, as he afterwards alleged, to obtain legal redress, although it is far from clear that he applied for it, Birnstiel declared war against the entire township of Geyer in which Schnee lived as an ordinary member of the

two hundred florins, and cannot pay them; he goes to Götz with a piteous tale: instantly the Iron Hand clutches the two first Cologne merchants travelling that way, and makes them pay the two hundred florins. . . Peculiarly interesting to the poet of that age (1771) was the consecration of *individual* greatness in Götz.'—*Lewes's 'Life and Works of Goethe,'* vol. i. p. 153. This beats Robin Hood hollow; for it does not appear that the tailor had been wronged or persecuted; yet Mr. Lewes seems to think this iron-handed act of violence a proof of individual greatness, and Mr. Carlyle would cordially agree with him.

community, and repaired to the nearest district of Bohemia to levy troops. He there fell in with a countryman, a Saxon cattle-driver, who had just begun a similar feud with a Bohemian noble by burning down his farmhouses. With the co-operation of this ally, Birnstiel managed to get together a formidable band, with which, preceded by drums and trumpets, he marched across the borders and beleaguered Geyer so closely that no one could go in or out without being stopped and laid under contribution by his gang.

The mayor or chief magistrate of the district earnestly pressed the Duke—not to punish the violators of the public peace, but—to bring about a compromise between the parties, which Schnee declined, under an apprehension that he might be compelled to make good the damage done and repay the money extorted by Birnstiel; so this system of organised robbery continued over a space of four years, namely, from 1539 to 1543, when the record suddenly breaks off, and we are left in ignorance whether Birnstiel succeeded in his enterprise or was hanged.

The following narrative illustrates the wild notions that prevailed in one of the principal seats of the Reformed faith at a time, 1568, when we should have thought true religion had begun to exercise its healing influences. Salzman, judge (Richter) of Canitz, wished to marry his deceased wife's brother's daughter, which the German Consistory then deemed illegal and anti-christian for reasons which a majority of the English bishops still think unanswerable. On the refusal of the parson of Thallwitz (the parish in which Canitz was situate) to bestow the marriage blessing, the love-sick and irritated judge formally proclaimed feud against the parson and all the villages and hamlets comprised in his cure.

A band of supporters was easily got together, and the parishioners had no alternative but to keep watch

and ward night and day to protect their persons and property from being burned by the magistrate. They contrived to take captive one of the most formidable of his retainers, Pegenau by name, a truculent-looking scoundrel, who could speak German, Bohemian, and a little Latin, besides several provincial dialects, wore a hood and trunk hose of scarlet lined with green, which he could wear inside-out on occasions, and was famous for the many murders and robberies he had committed, and the many pregnant women he had ripped up—the hands of unborn children being highly prized for amulets. This worthy readily proffered to turn king's evidence against another by whom he alleged he had been hired to shoot the Elector, receiving along with his instructions a powder which he was to swallow as soon as he had perpetrated the deed. It was warranted to make him invisible, but Pegenau, distrusting its efficacy, gave it to a dog, who died howling before his eyes. The record ends with the sentence of death passed on him, and we learn no more about the feud. Indeed there is something extremely tantalising in Dr. Weber's communications, although their incompleteness may be an evidence of their authenticity so far as they go.

The practice of resorting to reprisals for redress lasted till far into the eighteenth century, and was especially congenial to the temper of Mr. Carlyle's pattern monarch, Frederic William, whose inordinate passion for giants was constantly engaging him in discreditable broils. The audacity of his recruiting officers or crimps, stimulated by high rewards and severe threats, grew to such a height that no country in Europe was safe from outrage, and it was found necessary to make an example of some of them. Two were shot, and a third hanged, in Maestricht, in 1733. Frederic William retaliated by arresting several officers of the Low Countries who chanced to be in his do-

minions, and by demanding 250,000 dollars from the Dutch Commissaries in Königsberg, under a threat of levying contributions on the warehouses belonging to the Dutch. This difference was arranged; but, six years afterwards, a Prussian officer, taken in the mainour, was hanged at Liège, in full uniform, with the Order of Merit round his neck.

The Prussian ambassador at the English Court, M. de Bork, had contrived, by force or fraud, to export a good many subjects of his Britannic Majesty, which was the more irritating because, as is well known, his royal master and George II. cordially hated each other, and were with difficulty prevented from fighting a duel, for which the preliminary arrangements had actually been made. Whilst de Bork was absent on leave, the English Government took the opportunity to request that he might be replaced, as in case of his return he would be exposed to ill-treatment from the mob. The King of Prussia refused to recall him, and accompanied the refusal with an intimation that whatever was done to the Prussian minister in London, should be done to the English minister in Berlin.

A tall tenant of the Circensian Abbey of Paradies, in Poland, had long been watched with wistful eyes by the Prussian crimps. Aware of his danger, he never ventured across the border, and frequently shifted his night quarters. It was shrewdly guessed, however, that he would remain at home during the confinement of his wife; and, on the occurrence of this event, a recruiting party broke into his house, found the couple in bed together, and immediately proceeded to bind and carry him off. In the darkness and confusion, instead of tying his legs together, as they intended, they fastened one of his legs to one of his wife's, and pulled her out of bed along with him. She died from fright and exhaustion; but this trifling mishap was disregarded by the captors, who bore off

their prize exultingly, turning a deaf ear to the moans of the dying woman and the despairing cries of her bereaved helpmate. The Abbot of Paradies claimed his liegeman. The Prussians held him fast; and the abbot, a true member of the Church militant, seized, as hostages, several traders from the Prussian town of Züllichau, who were attending a market near the abbey, and, to the demand for their restitution, gallantly replied that he would keep them till his tall farmer was released. The result is graphically described in a magisterial report.

On March 21, 1740, at six in the morning, a company of musqueteers and a troop of hussars, reinforced by a number of townsmen from Züllichau, about 400 in all, appeared before the abbey-gate, with waggons laden with grenades, scaling-ladders, and other munitions of war. Prior to the assault, they were formed in three divisions—one to attack the convent outwork, one the hospital gate, and the third to act as a corps of observation and reserve. The monks opposed only a passive resistance, and breaches were speedily effected with levers and axes. Father Deodatus, the first monk who encountered the enemy, received a sabre-cut in the head. Father Amadeus, besides having his ears boxed, was thrown into agonies of fear by a sabre drawn backwards and forwards under his nose, and compelled to act as guide to the abbey, which was speedily cleared of all its valuables, sacred and profane.

The prior, who, like Prior Eustace in the 'Monastery,' took the post of danger properly appertaining to his superior, ventured to demand their business, and ran imminent risk of being sabred and bayoneted for his pains. A hussar aimed a blow at him, which was providentially intercepted by a vine-branch. The monks were assembled in the church, to celebrate a religious feast, the saint-day of St. Benedict. The

assailants mingled with the congregation; and after vainly calling for the prior, who had wisely withdrawn, proceeded to cuff, kick, and push about the monks, vowing that, if any defence were attempted, they would set fire to the cloisters. Much to the relief of the pious sufferers, the trumpets at length sounded the retreat. The concluding demand of the commander was a florin for each of his people, by way of remuneration for the fatigue they had undergone; but he was obliged to rest satisfied with an assurance that there was no money in the establishment. At last the troops marched off, to the cry of 'Victory! See what the Brandenburghers are capable of!' to which the hussar captain added, 'If you try reprisals again, we shall pay you a second visit.'

Another inroad of three hundred Prussians into Poland, for a similar purpose, did not turn out quite so well for the Brandenburghers. They were driven back in confusion; and the Russian ambassador notified the intention of his Government to resent any future invasion of the kind. On hearing this, the King upset a table, with everything on it, over Colonel Camus, the officer who had planned the assault of the abbey.

It will be remembered that Mr. Carlyle invites us to pity 'a man of genius' mounted on his hobby, and makes the 'poetic temperament' answerable for the aberrations of a despot who had no one quality of genius but its wilfulness, who was the most essentially prosaic and stupidly practical of human beings, who understood no argument but force, who used no instrument of persuasion but the cudgel, whose administration of justice resembled that of the Tartar monarch who caused the stomach of a wretch to be ripped open to see if the stolen milk was in it, and whose economy, financial and political, was that of the savage who cuts down the tree to get at the fruit. Mr. Carlyle's paradoxes exercise a widespread and baleful influence on

many of the most promising of the rising generation in both hemispheres, who reverence him as a prophet. We were, therefore, not sorry to find in the book before us some new and curious illustrations of his fallibility, in the shape of detailed and decided proofs that what he would fain pass off as the incidental caprices or weaknesses of his patriot-king formed, in fact, the very staple of the character.

The greater part of them have been derived from the despatches of the Count de Manteuffel, Saxon minister at Berlin, who was in the habit of transmitting to his Court reports resembling those which were regularly transmitted to the Venetian Republic, in its palmy days, by its ambassadors. An English minister at the Court of Berlin at a somewhat later period, whose credit for priority of information was at stake, took the bold and self-sacrificing step of making love to the unattractive wife of a Secretary for Foreign Affairs who had access to her husband's cabinet. The Count de Manteuffel was not a whit more scrupulous in his sources of information; and so long as the tobacco-parliament lasted, he experienced little difficulty in ascertaining what was said or done at its sittings, or elsewhere, by its royal president.

The extravagance of Frederic William's passion for giants very far exceeds the popular estimate of it, based on three or four good stories, which many believe to be apocryphal. He procured, through his emissaries, a register of all the tall men in Saxony, and was constantly intriguing or conspiring for the legal or illegal possession of some of them. Dr. Weber prints the heads of a contract for the exchange of various rarities and objects of art, to be selected from the Prussian museums, for tall fellows (*lange Kerls*). He enumerates a collection of medals; statues of Diana, Priapus, and Momus; an equestrian statue; a bronze St. George, and rare skins from the Indies; the whole

valued at 500,000 dollars. The tall Saxons were put down by the Prussian negotiator at the low figure of 300 dollars a head, which so disgusted the Saxon agent that he broke off the bargain. Marshal von Flemming sold the King two recruits for a sum of money and 'the pardon of M. de Sparfeld.' The King of Denmark, after vainly demanding, upon the faith of treaties and international law, the extradition of a criminal (Prætorius, who had murdered Count Christian von Rantzan), bought him for a dozen tall men. The Bishop of Wilna, a Polish refugee, had procured a safe-conduct by a promise of giants, which he failed to supply. He was consequently detained at Tilsit; and the Count de Manteuffel, when requested to intercede for him, writes :—

'Je m'emploierois volontiers pour son élargissement s'il était accusé d'avoir voulu p. e. détrôner le Roi de Prusse ou attenter à sa vie, mais que de parler pour quelqu'un qui a promis des grands hommes, ce seroit m'exposer à tout qui pouvoit m'arriver de fâcheux sans la moindre espérance de réussir.'

The commanders of companies were often placed in the most embarrassing dilemma, for the King required them to have 'lange Kerls,' and if possible foreigners, on the right flank. If these were found wanting, cashiering or Spandau was the word. In November, 1739, a major was sent to Spandau for six years for having no tall foreign recruits. In the preceding June two majors were broken in front of their regiments for no other assignable delinquency. One of them, Thatt, had already spent 10,000 dollars, probably his whole fortune, in tall recruits. A foreign fugleman, who had cost his captain 1500 dollars, got drunk, fell from a bridge into the Spree, and was drowned. The captain complained to the King, alleging that the loss had arisen through the negligence of the bridge superintendent, who should have seen to the security of the balus-

trade. His Majesty took this view of the question, and quartered a subaltern with six men on the superintendent till he replaced the soldier or compensated the captain.

A rich resident of Amsterdam had relatives in Prussia, whom, not being on good terms with them, he declared his intention to cut off with a shilling on his decease. The relatives applied to the King, and promised him a number of 'grosse Kerls,' if he would send their wealthy cousin to Spandau for life. The proposition was favourably received: and the Amsterdam cousin, lured into Prussia on some pretence or another, was seized and sent to Spandau, where he remained till the King's death.

Any promising recruit whom the King encountered in his walks was tied to the lash of a long whip, which his Majesty habitually carried, and led off to the nearest barrack or guard-house. Fine-looking boys were marked out for military service by a red collar round the neck. The story is well known, and not at all improbable, of the tall woman to whom his Majesty gave a note to be carried to the Colonel of the Guard,, who was forthwith to marry her to the tallest of the unmarried guardsmen. Suspecting its contents, she gave it to a little old woman, who faithfully delivered it and got a gigantic husband for her pains.[1]

There was a tragic as well as a comic side to the caprices of this man of genius. A tall grenadier, who had killed his landlord, declared his only motive to be the commission of a crime punishable by death, which would free him from an enforced service which had become intolerable. A young man of rank and lite-

[1] 'To review this towering regiment was his daily pleasure, and to perpetuate it so much his care, that when he met a tall woman he immediately commanded one of his Titanian retinue to marry her, that they might propagate procerity.'—Johnson's 'Memoirs of Frederick II., King of Prussia.'

rary habits, who had the misfortune to be tall and was refused his discharge on that account, became similarly desperate, resolved on killing the first person he met, rushed into the street and killed a child. The King soon hit upon an effectual method of checking this description of mutiny. Instead of inflicting death on some deserters who defied him to his face, he ordered their noses and ears to be cut off, and sent them to Spandau for life.

His Majesty's notions of justice were equally under the influence of the 'poetic temperament' when he was not mounted on his favourite hobby. On August 22, 1736, he was walking in the garden smoking his pipe, when there appeared before him the wife of a hautboy player, named Fischbach, to complain of her husband for adultery with a girl. The accused was confronted with her, and a scene of rude altercation ensued; in the course of which he admitted his intimacy with the girl, but denied its criminality, as well as all knowledge of what had become of her. On the assertion of the wife that their son, fourteen years old, was privy to the father's infidelity, and the place of concealment of the girl, the lad was sent for and examined. A storm arising during the inquiry, the King, instead of adjourning it within doors, ordered a tent to be pitched. The son was as obstinate or honestly ignorant as the father, and two buffoon attendants of the King tried to make him speak by caning him, which simply had the common effect of torture, in inducing him to heap story upon story to obtain momentary relief. His tormentors did not give over till he was nearer dead than alive with pain and terror.

Determined not to be baffled, the Prussian Solon caused Fischbach to be brought before him again, and as he still refused to give information against his supposed paramour, four non-commissioned officers were

ordered to cudgel him, which they did with such severity that, adds an eye-witness, Manteuffel, 'it was a wonder he survived. He never uttered a syllable, preferring to die under the cane rather than betray his beloved.' The concluding words of the report are remarkable:—

'J'avoue que cette exécution m'a inspiré une terreur dont je ne suis pas encore revenu: l'opiniâtreté du hautbois et de son fils m'a frappé, *mais moins que la tranquillité avec laquelle on voyait tourmenter ces malheureux.*'

The courtiers of Frederic William had seen too many of such exhibitions to be shocked by them.[1]

A man accused his wife of adultery with a State councillor, and demanded a divorce, but as he produced no proof, his demand was rejected, and his wife was acquitted by the criminal court. The plaintiff went straight to the King, who, on his own mere motion, drew up a judgment the very opposite of that given by the tribunal, adding: 'This judgment is much

[1] 'A just man, I say, and a valiant and veracious.'—(*Carlyle*, vol. i. p. 406.) Here is one of his own examples of justice:—'Doris Ritter, a 'comely-enough good girl, nothing of a beauty, but given to music, 'Potsdam *Cantor's* (Precentor's) daughter, has chanced to be standing in 'the door, perhaps to be singing within doors once or twice, when the 'Prince passed that way. Prince inquired about her music, gave her 'music, spoke a civility as young men will,—nothing more upon my 'honour; though his Majesty believes there was much more, and con-'demns poor Doris to be whipt by the beadle, and beat hemp for three 'years. Rhadamanthus is a strict judge, your Majesty, and might be a 'trifle better informed.'—(Vol. ii. p. 277.) Now for veracity. Frederic William, obliged to provide horses and travelling accommodation for the Czar Peter, writes to the postmaster:—'Observe, you contrive to do 'it for 6000 thalers: won't allow you one other penny; but you are to 'give out in the world that it costs me from 30 to 50,000.' Mr. Carlyle's comment on this combination of meanness, falsehood, and tyranny runs thus:—'So that here is the Majesty of Prussia, who beyond all men 'abhors lies, giving orders to tell one—alas, yes, a kind of lie or fib '(white fib or even *gray*), the pinch of thrift compelling. But what a 'window into the artless inner-man of his Majesty, even that gray fib, '—not done by oneself, but ordered to be done by the servant, as if 'that were cheaper'—(Vol. i. p. 424.)

more just than that fool's judgment.' He then summoned the complainant and the councillor, and when both were come, asked the first, 'Is that your man?' on his answering 'Yes,' 'Then give him,' exclaimed the King, 'a couple of boxes on the ear! the scoundrel shall marry the strumpet!' The boxes on the ear were duly administered, but the wedding, which was to take place the next day, by royal command, could not be completed, because the councillor had made his escape during the night.

In another case, in which the Consistory refused a divorce on the demand of the husband, the King wrote upon the margin of the record: 'It is quite clear that there are some gallants in the Consistory: I hope your wives will make cuckolds of you; and, complain as you will, you shall certainly keep them.'

An impudent and roguish adventurer, named Echhard, who had got possession of the royal ear by flattery, was named war and revenue councillor, received a patent of nobility and a decoration. The Electorate Chamber ventured a respectful protest and was thus addressed: 'The high, praiseworthy Chamber is entreated to let alone reasoning, and not to meddle with the honourable Echhard, or We shall come and in our own person undertake the presidency of the Chamber with a good cudgel.' There was a pictorial postscript from the royal pen or pencil, representing a gallows with a man hanging, and underwritten, 'The well-merited reward of the Electorate Chamber.' The King afterwards assigned Echhard a palace for his residence, and ordered the Academy of Science to frame an inscription, with the words, 'This is the reward of true service, *poliment tournés selon les règles de l'art;*' which recalls the scene in Molière where M. Jourdain desires his language-master to compose a billet-doux, by an eloquent amplification of '*Belle Marquise, vos beaux yeux me font mourir d'amour.*' The Academy

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demurred, or the King was not satisfied, for a motto of his own composition was set up: 'Thus is truth rewarded;' and the night following a gallows was added immediately above the motto.

One of Echhard's schemes was to enrich the royal treasury by speculations in grain. He told the King that complaints were made of the want of a market for corn in Prussia, and advised him to buy up all the corn, have it carried to Berlin, forbid importations from neighbouring countries, and sell the contents of his granaries as dearly as he could. No sooner said than done; and a rise of price, causing great privation, was the result. The Crown Prince, on his way from Rheinsberg, not far from the Mecklenburg boundary, met fourteen waggons laden with corn. On asking the drivers where they were going, he learnt that they were returning home after having been refused entrance into Prussia. He ordered them to turn back and unload their corn, which he purchased from them and sold to the people at the market price, being less than half of that for which the King was then selling it. Mr. Carlyle is probably of opinion that this was enlightened economy, and would be prepared to rank this Prussian Empson with Turgot, Colbert, Stein, or Hardenberg.[1] One of the first acts of Frederic the Great on his accession was to remove the restriction and throw open the magazines.

Frederic William employed knaves like Echhard knowingly and systematically. On being told after Grumkow's death, that some man of position and acknowledged merit should be named to a vacant post, he replied: 'You know nothing about the matter; I know from experience that people of position and merit are not fit for business. They intrench themselves behind their point of honour, when they do not

[1] 'That he (the King) understood National Economies, has now become very certain'—(*Carlyle*, vol. i. p. 406).

choose to obey my commands. If these are not what they think right and reasonable, they make objections and take it ill when I tell them to get away with them. This does not suit me, and for the future I prefer taking "Kläffer" (yelping dogs), whom one can order about without their being sulky, who must do whatever I wish without reasoning.'

The selection of a public servant was by no means the sole occasion on which his practice and theory corresponded; thereby showing that his departures from the right path were rather the rule than the exception. In the course of a conversation in July, 1734, at which some members of the diplomatic body were present besides his ministers, the binding force of treaties was discussed, and the King observed, with more frankness than discretion, that no sooner was one made than the parties began thinking of the best means of breaking it. This colloquy ensued:

'*The King.*—Count Manteuffel, you know what treaties are: say honestly, is a single one ever made with the intention of keeping it?

'*Manteuffel.*—Your Majesty is joking when you ask such a question. The prior question would be, whether great rulers are honest men, and are anxious to be esteemed as such. How could they pass for such, if they did not hold to truth and faith?

'*The King.*—That is all true enough; but what treaties are observed? I know none.

'*Manteuffel.*—I know many. Your Majesty has made all your treaties with the intention of keeping them, and you do keep them in fact.

'*The King.*—Yes; I have always had the intention; but I have not always abided by it. It pains me; but I must own as much.'

He then related to the whole company that, in the times of Czar Peter the First, he (the King) had solemnly promised never to abandon the Czar, and

never to make a separate peace with Sweden, which notwithstanding was made.

'"Was that right?" he continued. "I do not think so; but it was done. I held out a long time. I worked myself into a fever about it; but what could I do? My rogues"—the chief of whom was present—"plagued me so. Kniphausen would not leave me a moment's peace: I must sign. I might assent or dissent; and I ended by signing. That was a downright fraud."'

This, taken altogether, may be deemed one of the most creditable traits recorded of him, although it would reflect no great amount of credit on an ordinary ruler.

Johnson praises Frederic the Great for so accurate an acquaintance with his cellar as to be able to tell where a bottle of any given wine was to be found. He may have inherited or learnt this curious qualification for kingcraft, if he really possessed it, from his father, whose minute attention to the expenses of his household was one of the peculiar features of his character. He kept the Queen and Princesses on such short commons that they would have been in danger of perishing by inanition, had not the Crown Prince surreptitiously added two dishes daily to their dinner. The cook was forbidden to make the slightest addition to their bill of fare under penalty of the gallows, and the written order to this effect concluded: 'This order is to be obeyed after my death.' One day, after remaining some time sunk in thought, he suddenly addressed the Queen: 'Sophy, what is the price of eggs?' On her confessing her ignorance, he flew into a passion; and told her that after his death she would die on a dunghill, because she attended to nothing. He then sent for some kitchen-maids, examined them about all sorts of household trifles, and bade them sweep out the apartment in his and the Queen's presence, 'that the Queen might learn how it was done.'

Till 1738 the sum of eight dollars a day was allowed for the royal table. Early in that year he was put out of humour by the desertion of sundry giants; and the conviction coming upon him that he was plundered by his cooks, he reduced the allowance to seven dollars and a half, and issued two fresh decrees: 1. For the banishment of all turnspits and kitchen helps, as a race good only for stealing the eatables and making the cooks lazy. 2. To prohibit, under the penalty of the gallows, any tasting by the cooks, because, under the pretence of tasting, they levied a heavy toll on the dishes. This proves that his Majesty was not a gourmand, for the editor of the famous 'Almanach' lays down that the forefinger of a good cook should travel unceasingly from his saucepans to his tongue, and suggests that, if his taste should lose its delicacy, the sole mode of restoring to him 'cette fleur qu'il a perdue, de lui faire reprendre sa souplesse, sa délicatesse, et ses forces, c'est de purger le cuisinier, quelle résistance qu'il y oppose.' It is fortunate for the Prussian cooks that their royal master did not think of this method of improving them.

'Touch not, taste not,' was a maxim which one of the royal suite, high in favour, neglected to his cost. A barrel of oysters was announced, price ten dollars. The King, who liked oysters, but was staggered by the cost, asked von Kleist if they were likely to turn out good. 'Excellent,' was the reply; and on being asked how he knew, he stated that, passing through the kitchen as they were opening the oysters, he had tasted one. 'Very well,' said the King: 'he who has eaten one may eat them all, and repay me the money they have cost.' He compelled Kleist to take the bargain off his hands.

More wild boars than were wanted having been killed by the royal foresters, the King took out his ministers and suite to look at them, and carelessly

asked the ministers what they were worth a head. To flatter him, they named a high price, seven dollars. 'Right, right; seven dollars. Each of you will take one, but you must pay ready money.' After a grand *chasse* the slaughtered boars and porkers were counted by hundreds, like pheasants after an English *battue*, and portioned out in lots amongst the officials, nobility, and townspeople, who were obliged to take and pay for them whether they liked swine's-flesh or not. The Jews of Berlin were compelled to take 200 head at once, after a week of extraordinary slaughter in 1724. The Jews were turned to account in many ways. When the King wished to afford help which cost nothing, he was wont to give the object of his bounty a licence or privilege in blank for the settlement of a Jew in Berlin. This was saleable, and the name could be filled in at pleasure. One of them has been known to sell for seven or eight hundred dollars.

Finding the new part, the Tyburnia or Belgravia of Berlin (*Dorotheenstadt*), not sufficiently peopled, he ordered several families who were on the point of quitting, and had already removed their goods, to stay in it. In 1737, under the pretence that the soldiers were not well lodged, he issued a decree that the front rooms of the houses in the Old Town should be given up to the military, and that the householders who were not content to live in their own back rooms should remove to the New Town. To throw a halo round this child of his fancy, he decreed in 1739 that, dating from March 8, every one who possessed a carriage and horse, without distinction of ranks, should appear every Sunday from three to five on the promenade in the New Town, under the penalty of 100 dollars. The effect is described as curious in the extreme, since 'carriage' was understood to mean every description of vehicle, from a butcher's cart to a coroneted coach;

so that the promenade resembled the Epsom road on a Derby day, rather than the Prater, the Bois de Boulogne, or Hyde Park in its glory.

We must admit that there is considerable fertility of resource and variety of invention in these administrative expedients, and no want of energy or volition in their enforcement. But if these are proofs of genius or natural emanations of the poetic temperament, great injustice has been done to the East, where full many a Pacha wastes his poetry on (literally) the desert air: full many a Turkish Frederic William rests inglorious *caret quia vate sacro*—for want of a discriminating eulogist like Mr. Carlyle.

The late John Fector Laurie of Maxwelton and Lord C. H. were descending the Nile, when, their head boatman becoming obstreperous, they stopped at the first military post, and complained to the commander. He heard their charge, and ordered the man to be bastinadoed without waiting for his defence, remarking, 'Do you suppose these two English gentlemen would have taken the trouble to come to me about you, if you were not in the wrong?' Surely, there was quite as much poetic justice in this decision as in Frederic William's mode of dealing with the accused husband and the son.

The late Lord Alvanley dining with a Pacha who was proud of his cook, indirectly hinted that the man's performances were not quite on a level with Carême's. The next morning the head of the *chef* was suspended, by way of delicate attention, to the guest's saddle-bow. Beheading for tasting to no purpose may pair off with hanging for tasting at all.

The author of 'Hajji Baba' related, as founded on fact, that an Oriental governor, who had seized an English traveller's medicine-chest, was puzzled what to make of it; so he collected all the Jews in the town, made each swallow a portion of the contents of a

box or phial, and locked them together in a room till the effects were ascertained. This is more original than making the Jews of Berlin buy pork.

Professor Ranke describes the death-bed of Frederic William as presenting an edifying and touching scene, in which he addresses his successor in set phrases very similar to those applied by Philip of Macedon to Alexander after the adroit taming of Bucephalus. The dying despot may have had some lucid or maudlin moments, during which he showed himself not utterly destitute of rational faculties and natural affection; but there is abundant evidence that his demeanour on the near approach of death did not belie the general tenor of his life. In his first colloquy with a spiritual adviser, he improved on the doctrine of the French noble, who maintained that '*le bon Dieu*' would think twice before making up his mind '*de damner un Clermont-Tonnerre.*' 'Would it be right,' argued Frederic, 'that God, who from His love for me puts me here in His place to rule over so many thousands at my good pleasure, should one day liken me to one of these, and judge me with the same strictness?' The clergyman, a Protestant, did his duty manfully, and replied that God gave power to be used as He used it, with justice and mercy, not according to the good pleasure of the ruler, who would be punished for the abuse of it as the worst of sinners; whereupon the King told him he was an ignoramus, and might go to the Devil.

The patient grew more accommodating as he grew worse. In a colloquy on the same topic with another divine, he tried hard to extort the admission that faith was sufficient without good works, and that the love of God did not imply the forgiveness of enemies or the love of one's neighbour as oneself.

'*King.*—God knows that I have no enemy whom I have not willingly forgiven everything. I know of none but that —— the King of England; but he too shall be forgiven.

Ficke (the Queen), write to your brother, as soon as I am dead, that before my end I forgave him everything with all my heart. Do you hear? *when I am fairly dead and no mistake.*

'*Divine.*—I do not require to know the names of your enemies; but perhaps you remember others whom you hate as much and with as little reason as your brother-in-law, although they may be no great lords or foreigners.'

Here 'long Hacke,' the favourite attendant, came in with medicine, and the divine was dismissed.

A prison chaplain on being asked by the Rev. W. Harriss, of honoured memory, whether his ministry had been generally attended with success, replied, 'With very little. A short time since I thought I had brought to a better state of mind a man under sentence of death, for an attempt to murder a woman. I gave him a Bible, and he was most assiduous in the study of it, frequently quoting passages which he said convinced him of the heinousness of his crime.' The chaplain goes on to say that, struck by this promise of reformation, he procured with some difficulty a commutation of the sentence, and called in person to inform the penitent of the future life of goodness and piety in store for him. 'His gratitude knew no bounds; he said I was his preserver, his deliverer. "And here," he added, as he grasped my hand in parting, "here is your Bible. I may as well return it to you, *for I hope I shall never want it again.*"' If the old King had got a respite, he was equally ready to revert to his pristine state of hatred and uncharitableness.

Blowing the nose or clearing the throat in the King's chamber was forbidden under the penalty of a ducat for each offence. Hearing that his attendants were boarded in the palace, he ordered them to bring their dinners along with them, to be submitted to his inspection before eaten; on which occasions he frequently partook of their fare, and sometimes exchanged one of their dishes for one of his own. One day he ate and

enjoyed a snipe, which the cook, hearing he was out of humour, had omitted in the bill of fare. The day after, seeing snipe again, he struck it out, saying he wanted no such expensive garbage. To the remonstrance that he had declared the first snipe excellent, he replied that he took it for a present, and ate it out of compliment to the giver. The cook, therefore, was mulcted in the price. In all Pope's famous Epistle there are no more curious instances of the ruling passion strong in death than these.

He insisted on the Crown Prince's taking an oath to make no alteration after his death in the colleges or army, not to lay hands on the treasure, and to take into his service no person whose name should not be mentioned in a list. The Crown Prince respectfully refused. On the 31st January, 1740, the King exclaimed, 'I am not sorry that I must die; for he who fears death is a —— ——. What pains me to the heart is that I must have such a brute (*Unmenschen*) as my son for successor.' Another time he vowed his sole cause for self-reproach was that he had not caused his son to be executed ten years ago.[1] When the attendants rose on the Prince's entrance, the King flew into a violent passion, and cried out, 'Sit down in the Devil's name, or go all of you to the Devil.'

Despite of his bluster, he was by no means void of apprehension that he was about to travel in the same direction himself, and his efforts to keep up his courage

[1] In August, 1730, the Crown Prince had a narrow escape for his life, and his sister was beaten and otherwise brutally ill-treated for interposing in his behalf. Mr. Carlyle introduces his account of the transaction with these words:—'The poor King, except that he was not conscious of intending wrong, but much the reverse, walked in the hollow night of Gehenna all that while, and was often like to be driven mad by the turn things had taken,'—as if the turn things had taken was not exclusively owing to his own madness or brutality. Mr. Carlyle may fairly claim those privileges of genius which he gratuitously accords to 'the poor King,' but even genius should refrain from constantly running counter to the moral and common sense of mankind.

strongly resemble those of Jonathan Wild when, maddened by brandy and despair, he shouts at the top of his voice in the ocean solitude, '*Who's afraid?*' The year before his death the King was suffering from gout, and General von Schwerin, to comfort him, suggested that he need not be afraid of dying of it. 'What!' shouted the King, 'do you believe I am afraid of death? Bring two pistols, or better still, two casks of powder, and matches; each of us shall take his seat on one, and he who sets fire to *his* last shall be counted the greatest coward of the two.'

He died on May 31, 1740. On April 22 he went out in a wheel chair. Seeing a mechanic stare at him, he stopped the chair and sent a page to give the man six pulls of the nose. Whilst this was going on, an exciseman came up, and was asked what he wanted. He said he was rejoiced to see his Majesty so well. His Majesty gave him a couple of blows with his cane and ordered the footmen to give him a sound cudgelling, which was administered forthwith. After this his Majesty continued his progress, and the frightened people dispersed 'en l'accompagnant de mille bénédictions.' These benedictions probably resembled those which he liberally dispensed.

Shortly before his death, when the Crown Prince was with him, he called up three of his most faithful and attached attendants, and when they were looking for a parting recognition of their services and a recommendation to the heir, he solemnly enjoined the Prince to hang all three of them as soon as the breath was out of his body.

Byron, in one of his fits of waywardness, contends that your true poet is the miser, who indulges his imagination instead of gratifying his own or other people's senses with his wealth; but we own we see neither poetry nor genius in the accumulation of wealth or the formation of armies by obvious and

vulgar means. Frederic William, however, is a social and political phenomenon well worth studying in detail; and the proof that he has hitherto been imperfectly understood is to be found in the view taken of his life and character by Mr. Carlyle, which so learned and conscientious a writer would surely not have hazarded had he anticipated that the revelations of the Baireuth memoirs were about to be thus confirmed and amplified.

Amongst the curious and doubtful passages of history on which light is thrown by this compilation, is the tragic fate of Königsmark and the Princess Sophia Dorothea, wife of the Crown Prince of Hanover, afterwards George I. Although the tale has been told, with variations, by writers of ingenuity and research,[1] none of them had the good fortune to light upon the narrative discovered by Dr. von Weber, which was drawn up in 1725 by Count Moritz of Saxony (Marshal Saxe), the son of the beautiful Countess Aurora of Königsmark, from family papers and traditions. We shall give the leading features of his version in an abridged shape.

Sophia Dorothea was the daughter of the Duke of Celle, at whose Court Königsmark was brought up. It was the familiar story of the page and the princess. So tender a friendship had grown up between them, that, during the celebration of her marriage with the Crown Prince of Hanover, Königsmark concealed himself in the chapel, and nearly betrayed the secret by the violence of his emotions. To avoid further risks of this kind, he made a journey to Sweden, where he remained till he had recovered his senses and his self-possession. On his return, his respectful adoration was

[1] One of the latest and most interesting accounts, though obviously coloured for effect, appeared in the 'Revue des Deux Mondes,' for June 1853, from the able pen of M. Blaze de Bury. See also 'The Queens of the House of Hanover.' By Dr. Doran. In two volumes, 1855.

renewed and tacitly permitted by the object. It was purely Platonic, and might have been unattended by compromising results, had not the Countess of Platen fallen in love with him. She was the mistress of the Elector, over whom she held sovereign sway, and, although no longer in the bloom of youth, she was both surprised and enraged to find her advances received by a young officer of the body-guard, in which Königsmark held a commission, much as those of the Sultana were received by Don Juan or those of Mrs. Potiphar by Joseph.

Her wounded vanity suggested that a rival was the cause, and after jealously scrutinizing the demeanour of all the court ladies, her suspicions fell upon the Princess, who was in the habit of indulging her young admirer with occasional opportunities of private communication. Furnished with ample proofs of their indiscretion, and giving it a worse name, she hurried to the Elector, and urged him to take summary vengeance against his daughter-in-law; but his mildness of character made harsh expedients revolting to him, and he simply commanded the attendance of Königsmark, and told him, 'Count, I know all. Here is a letter for Prince Frederic Augustus (the general of the Imperial army); begone: apply from Hanover for your discharge. Farewell, and remember the friendship I am manifesting for you.' There was no alternative but to obey: he joined the Imperial army, and served in it till the end of the campaign, when he requested leave of absence, for the purpose of visiting Hanover, from the Prince Commander, who granted it reluctantly.

The fatal lure was a ribbon, once bound round a bouquet given by the Princess as a prize at a match of running at the ring, at which he had come off conqueror. He had left it behind on his hurried departure, fastened to the colours of his company, and it

was to reclaim this token that he came back. The standard was in the custody of the captain, his successor, one Count Platen, a relative of the Countess, who had already got possession of the ribbon. Königsmark desired her relative to tell her that, if she would give it up, he would forgive her all the sufferings she had brought upon him, and that even the arms of the Elector would prove an unsafe place of refuge if she refused. This message, faithfully delivered, was not well calculated to obtain a favour from a proud, passionate and jealous woman, who saw her opportunity at a glance, and was withheld by no feelings of remorse or former love from profiting by it. She feigned hesitation, and, by negotiating for the delivery of the ribbon, induced Königsmark to prolong his secret stay in Hanover till she had completed her plot.

Her grand difficulty was the Elector, who was at length over-persuaded to give a modified assent. She had in her pay two Italian cut-throats, ready for any deed of villany; she joined with them three Germans of her household, who received instructions to watch for Königsmark on a specified day in the palace garden, not far from the steps leading to the Princess's apartment, to throw themselves upon him, stifle his cries, and bring him into a subterranean room of the Castle, called the laboratory. These instructions were given in the presence of the Elector. Her secret orders to the Italians, in their own language, were to murder Königsmark in the laboratory; and, just before they repaired to the rendezvous, her waiting-maid was to hand them refreshments mixed with poison, so that they might not survive the deed long enough to give evidence of her complicity. To inveigle Königsmark into the snare, the co-operation of the Princess's confidential attendant, Miss Dillon, was required. By the command of the Elector, the poor young lady repaired trembling to a private interview with the Countess,

who, by the threat of instant death, compelled her to write the following billet:—

'MONSIEUR LE COMTE,—Ma Princesse désire de vous voir, elle ne peut pas vous escrire, s'estant bruslée la main, et m'a ordonné de vous faire savoir que vous pouvez vous rendre ce soir chez elle par le petit escalier comme austre fois; elle me paroist inquiette de votre silence. A Dieu, tirez bientost de doute la plus aimable princesse du monde.'

On receiving this billet, Königsmark hurried to the garden, ascended the steps, and found the Princess in her usual sitting-room. She was surprised to see him, not knowing he was in Hanover, and gently reproached him for his indiscretion. He produced Miss Dillon's note as his justification: on reading which the Princess exclaimed that he was lost; that it was a trick of the Countess, and that she would not lose a moment in ascertaining the truth. He hurried down the steps, and was just entering the garden saloon when the three Germans and two Italians fell upon him. He defended himself with skill and courage. Two of the Germans and one of the Italians were killed on the spot; the second Italian and the third German, named Fourier, were wounded, when Fourier, a very strong man, threw away his sword, caught up the cloak which Königsmark had let fall, and as the Count was rushing upon the Italian, the sole remaining obstacle to his escape, flung it over his head. The Italian instantly ran him through the body, and he sank senseless to the ground.

In the narrative of M. Blaze de Bury, the Countess and Princess are present at this scene, and an animated dialogue, worthy of one of M. Alexandre Dumas's melodrames, is carried on between the actors and actresses. In the narrative before us, the Countess judiciously keeps her distance, and the Princess only comes on the ground time enough to be made aware that a bloody deed has been done. She was roused from the reverie

or stupor into which she had sunk after the Count's departure, by the barking of her pet dog at the door: on its being opened he rushed down the steps, and she followed him. The first objects that met her eye in the saloon were the two men preparing to carry off Königsmark. After a vain effort to approach or call for help, finding her strength failing, she tried to regain her chamber, but stumbled over one of the dead bodies and fainted. The murderers left their victim, carried her to her room, laid her on a couch, locked the door on the outside to prevent further interruption, and after conveying the Count to the laboratory, proceeded to report proceedings to the Elector.

Fourier threw all the blame of what had been done in excess of his Highness's instructions on the Italian, who confidently appealed to the Countess; and the Elector, half beside himself with confusion and remorse, requested an interview with the Princess, to which she repaired in company with her husband, the Crown Prince, who had passed the preceding day and night at his hunting-box. They were thus addressed by the Princess:—

'I have only a very few words to say to you. I will not lower myself to persuade you of my innocence. I am guilty, but only in this, that in cowardly obedience I broke my troth to Count Königsmark. I loved Königsmark before the duty was imposed on me, Prince, of obeying you. I own, shuddering, my fault in permitting him access to me; and the rest of my life shall be devoted to repentance and recollection. I am the cause of his death: it lies on me to revenge him. Be prepared, therefore, for every horror that revenge can impose.'

At the frank commencement of this pithy speech, the Crown Prince must have felt like Sir Peter Teazle when he exclaims, 'Now I believe the truth is coming out indeed;' and the conclusion naturally suggested the prudence of placing some slight restraint on the

movements of his spouse. The Count, however, was not dead: his wounds were reported dangerous but not mortal; and the thought occurred whether his recovery and release would not be the best things that could happen under the circumstances, when the surviving Italian began to feel the effects of the poison administered by the waiting-maid, sent for two of his countrymen in default of a spiritual confessor, made a clean breast of it, and died invoking vengeance on the Countess. She was disgraced and ruined if Königsmark lived to disentangle and denounce the conspiracy, and he was accordingly despatched by poison. His brother-in-law, Count von Löwenhaupt, made a gallant attempt at rescue, and actually forced his way to the vault, where he found no trace of his relative but these words scrawled with coal on the wall: '*Philippe de Königsmark a rempli sa destinée dans ce lieu le* 14 *Fév. de l'année* 1694.'

The fate of the Princess is well known: she was divorced from her husband and confined in the Castle of Ahlden, near Celle, till her death in 1726, twenty-nine years after these events. Count Moritz says that she retained her attitude of dignified superiority, if not quite of injured innocence, and refused all offers of reconciliation; and this is the point in which his narrative most materially differs from the popular versions. Whether she was guilty or not in the worst acceptation of the term, is one of those questions which people will decide according to their excess or lack of charity, their belief or disbelief in Platonics. Making every allowance for the pride of the Princess and the delicacy of the admirer, these admitted private interviews sound compromising at best. 'The progress of a private conversation,' says Scott in reference to Leicester and Elizabeth in 'Kenilworth,' 'betwixt two persons of different sexes is often decisive of their fate, and gives it a turn very different from what they them-

selves anticipated. Gallantry becomes mingled with conversation, and affection and passion come gradually to mix with gallantry. Nobles, as well as shepherd swains, will, in such a trying moment, say more than they intended ; and queens, like village maidens, will listen longer than they should.'

From the correspondence between the Count and Princess, especially from her letters, unfavourable conclusions have been deduced ; but they are not utterly inconsistent with the theory of her personal purity: their authenticity may be questioned; and the entire tenor might have been changed by the alteration or introduction of a sentence or two. We now know, what was all along suspected, that Mrs. Piozzi's letters to Conway, the actor, published as 'love-letters,' have been shamefully garbled to bear out the title ;[1] and the letters of the Princess may have undergone a similar process. When the divorce was threatened, she again avowed her affection for Königsmark, and offered to take the sacrament on its stainlessness. Wonderful to relate, the offer was accepted. Dignified ecclesiastics officiated at the altar: with the elements in her hands she called God to witness her truth, and then, having undergone the ordeal without blenching, she challenged the Countess Platen to do the same. The Countess turned pale and refused.

Instances of strange imposture and wondrous credulity abound in these volumes ; where we find the very tricks of spirit-raising and table-creaking which have recently been turned to good account under the auspices, we regret to add, of persons who should be prevented by self-respect from lending a momentary sanction to such charlatanry. Here, also, we meet with anomalous crimes and atrocities which set all ordinary theories of proof, motive, and probability at

[1] The originals are (or were) in the possession of Mrs. Ellet, an American lady of literary distinction.

defiance. The punishments are often on a par in point of singularity with the delinquencies, and prison discipline appears to have been imperfectly understood. Instead of simple decapitation, one recorded sentence is, 'that the criminal be cut into two pieces, the head part the smaller, and the body part the larger, as a well-merited doom to him and a terrible example to others.' Three incendiaries were apprehended and convicted in Eilenburg. One was burnt to death, another beheaded, and the third condemned to be branded and kept in safe custody till his reform was ascertained. The branding was easy, but the safe custody embarrassed the town-council, who ended by putting him in irons and sending him daily 'to beg his bread from door to door, with a view to his reformation.' To the indignation and surprise of their worships, as they report, 'the ungrateful rascal, not appreciating their clemency, stole away.'

Peter Jokuff had been guilty of contempt by words or gestures against the tribunals of Wilthen, and refused to ask pardon or express contrition. Having no prison or legal place of confinement at their disposal, they placed the said Peter under arrest in the public-house, where he was chained by the leg to the public table, from September 2, 1750, to February 15, 1751. Barring the awkwardness of the position, he led an agreeable life enough, as he had plenty of company, and could eat and drink his fill at the expense of the frequenters of the house, with whom he was in high favour for his spirited contumacy. So the magistracy caused a kind of wooden cage to be constructed in the same room, shut him up in it, and by strict prohibitions to the landlord and guests did all that in them lay to confine him to a bread-and-water diet. They tried to put both his feet in the stocks, but met with so determined a resistance that they were obliged to rest satisfied with putting one. He remained in the cage till

August 15, 1751, when, being still unsubdued, he was removed to the newly constructed house of correction at Waldheim, where, we regret to say, we lose sight of him altogether.

Valuable illustrations of the history of German morals and manners may be deduced from sumptuary laws against luxury and dress. Less than a century since, these were frequently and invidiously enforced in Germany. Thus a formal report of the courts at Hirschstein makes known to the administrative body, at the instance of the church-patron and judge, Julius Alexander von Hartitsch, that the excess of the peasantry in dress had become intolerable, inasmuch as three farmers' daughters had appeared at church attired in silks, furs, gold brocades, and spangles, which are detailed in the document with such minuteness as to justify a suspicion that the accusing elder was set on by the ladies of his family and had taken counsel with them. His demand was that the three damsels should be warned to dress according to their degree, under penalty of having their finery publicly stripped off. Their fathers pleaded in reply, that they had shown a particular liking for such attire: that they had town marriages in prospect; lastly, that the garments in question were by no means expensive, and were more convenient than the ancestral habits, veils, and hoods. Their persecutor was still unsatisfied, and called for summary judgment on their contumacy. The fathers appealed to the provincial government, who rejected the appeal, and ordered the appellants to forbid the alleged excess in dress, to give Hartitsch notice that they had done so, and to let the affair rest.

So late as 1786, a fur cap excited much local agitation, and led to a serious conflict of the authorities. The daughter of the state-piper, Meischner, at Eisenbach, appeared at church with the cap. She was a

pretty girl; it became her; and the town-judge, Stölzel, looked at her oftener than was agreeable to his wife. The result was that the next day, under domestic compulsion, he issued an order to the piper to prevent his daughter from wearing the cap again. The piper appealed to the district magistrate, who, after inspecting the head-dress, and finding it composed of ordinary and unforbidden materials, formally authorised the damsel to wear it, and gave the judge due notice of the fact. The judge held to his prohibition, and the town was divided into two parties, who exhibited as much eagerness and animosity as the greens and blues of the amphitheatre, or the smallendians and bigendians of Lilliput. The old and ugly women, with their husbands, supported the judge; the young and pretty, with the bachelors, were mostly on the side of the magistrate. The married interest was strongest in the town council, and one of their myrmidons was commissioned to repair to the church on February 19, 1786, and before the whole congregation remove the cap from the fair head of the wearer. He performed this invidious duty without hesitation or compunction, and bore off the cap to the council, who condemned it as lawful prize; whereupon the leaders of the opposite party retorted by purchasing a finer and more becoming cap, in which the piper's daughter appeared the following Sunday, to the confusion of her enemies and amidst the triumphant congratulations of her friends. This *coup-de-main* carried the day. The council, taken by surprise, wanted courage or presence of mind enough for a second confiscation; and before the lapse of another week, the central authorities interfered. The council was eventually ordered to make restitution and pay the costs.

The exact number of dishes to be served at the table of each class of the community according to their rank

was carefully prescribed; and a licence was required for any departure from the ordinance. A long process is reported, in which a list of the dishes and the guests, with a minute description of their quality, was submitted to the Grand Duke in council, who, after deliberating with a gravity resembling that of the Roman Senate in the famous turbot case *temp.* Domitian, acquitted the accused. Musical instruments were the subject of equally stringent regulations; trumpets and trombones being especially confined to grand occasions and forbidden to persons of low degree. The trumpeters and kettle-drummers formed a close and highly privileged corporation. One Mather Richter, at Altenberg, was fined 200 dollars for allowing trumpets to be blown at his daughter's wedding; and so late as 1732 the trumpeters and trombone-players of Weissenfels lodged a complaint against the bailiff of Freiburg for daring to make the state-piper attend on him with trumpets and trombones. The defence was, that persons of distinction were present: and the cause came at last before the Law Faculty of Leipzig, who, on due examination of the circumstances and the precedents, let off the offender on payment of costs.

Amongst the numerous instances of popular prejudice which abound in this collection, the municipal ordinances against shepherds are the most unaccountable. Not only were they forbidden to settle in towns or to become members of guilds; but to intermarry with the pastoral class carried into a family a taint like that supposed to be communicated by the smallest intermixture of black blood in the United States. With these curious and whimsical incidents of German morals and manners in the last century, we take leave of Dr. Weber.

ENGLAND AND FRANCE: THEIR NATIONAL QUALITIES, MANNERS, MORALS, AND SOCIETY.

Notes on England. By H. TAINE, D.C.L. Oxon, etc. Translated, with an Introductory Chapter, by W. F. RAE. Second Edition. London: 1872.

Two familiar lines of Burns' are constantly repeated under an impression that the soundness of the thought or sentiment that dictated them is unimpeachable:—

> 'Oh, wad some power the giftie gie us
> To see oursels as ithers see us.'

The prevalent notion is that others must necessarily see us as we are — through a clear, transparent medium, neither transfigured by vanity and flattery, nor distorted by prejudice and dislike. It is altogether a mistaken notion. People are quite as open to error in judging others as in judging themselves; and the point of view they take up for the purpose is far more frequently determined by misleading influences than by the unsophisticated desire of truth. The best intentions, the most earnest struggle for impartiality, are no guarantee for strict justness of appreciation: because we cannot shake off our idiosyncracy; we cannot, formed as we are, see things or persons with the calm, pure eye of reason. Where, in this world of intrigue, ambition, passion, and caprice, is the admired and envied wit, beauty, orator, or statesman to find the 'ithers' who are to serve as the infallible helps to self-knowledge? Is Mr. Gladstone to seek them at the Carlton, or Mr. Disraeli at Brooks's?'

It is the same with communities as with individuals, or it may be worse; for in nation judging nation, there is the national character to affect the judgment, and the general as well as the particular bias to be calculated on. Each has a different and ever-varying criterion of merit, consideration, and morality. 'In Spain people ask, Is he a grandee of the first class? In Germany, Can he enter into the Chapters? In France, Does he stand well at court? In England, Who is he?'[1] This was written towards the middle of the eighteenth century; but although the revolutionary changes which each country except England has undergone, have extended to social habits and modes of thinking as well as to institutions, their respective standards of superiority remain essentially unlike.

Whilst freely admitting, therefore, that the 'enlightened foreigner' may afford useful hints or warnings, we demur to his jurisdiction when he assumes to constitute a supreme court without appeal; and the enlightened Frenchman, from Voltaire downwards, is peculiarly open to distrust. His fineness and quickness of perception, his rapidity and fertility of association, his range of sentiment and thought, his boldness and vivacity, nay, his very paradoxes and pseudo-philosophy, make him a most entertaining writer of travels; but he is spoiled as a teacher, and sadly damaged as an authority, by his vanity, his marvellous self-confidence, his false logic, and his ingrained ineradicable conviction that there is nothing first-rate, nothing truly great or admirable, nothing really worth living for, out of France.

A Frenchman and an Englishman were fishing with indifferent success in one of Lord Lytton's ponds at Knebworth, when the Frenchman, who had caught

[1] 'En Espagne on demande, Est-ce un grand de la première classe? En Allemagne, Peut-il entrer dans les chapitres? En France, Est-il bien à la cour? En Angleterre, Quel homme est-il?—(*Helvetius.*)

nothing, thus addressed his companion: 'Il me semble, Monsieur, que les étangs anglais ne sont pas si poissonneux que les fleuves français.' As the conversation proceeded, it appeared that the only English pond he had ever fished was the one before him, and the only French river, the Seine.

Sir Samuel Romilly and a French general were discussing a point of equity law. Sir Samuel gave his opinion in opposition to that of General S——. 'Pardonnez-moi, mon cher Romilly, vous vous trompez tout-à-fait: je le sais, car j'ai lu Blackstone ce matin même.'

Nor let any one fancy that the national character of the French is materially altered by the crushing defeats they have sustained, or the unparalleled humiliations they have undergone at the hands of conquerors, who, in weighing the ransom, ruthlessly threw the sword into the scale. M. Thiers lost no time in preparing to play Camillus to Prince Bismarck's Brennus;[1] and no speaker in the debate on the army made a more telling hit than the Bishop of Orleans, when he declared that Germany was not a great nation, but simply a great barrack. The same (under existing circumstances) pardonable petulance and irritability will occasionally break out when England and the English are discussed; for the French have not forgiven, nor are soon likely to forgive, our neutrality during their worst hour of trial. 'To be sure,' observed a distinguished Frenchman to an accomplished and ready-witted Englishwoman of rank, 'it was foolish in us to hope better things from a nation of shopkeepers.' 'These popular sayings'—was the

[1] Having thus mentioned M. Thiers, I will venture an opinion that—making full allowance for his warlike and protectionist tendencies—'foreign nations and the next ages' (to whom Bacon bequeathed his own name and memory) will regard him as the ablest administrator and most consummate statesman that France could boast in her severest hour of trial, and the best qualified to restore her fallen fortunes, had she trusted him.

well-merited retort—'are frequently destitute of any solid foundation: *we* have been in the habit of calling *you* a nation of soldiers.'

M. Taine, the last Frenchman of eminence who has written fully and freely on England, has evidently struggled hard to shake off the common weaknesses of his countrymen; and if not quite so successful as could be wished in this respect, he has produced a curious and interesting book—a book, however, in which just views and sterling truths are rather indicated than developed, whilst the most valuable trains of thought are not unfrequently suggested by the paradoxes.

His method—for he insists that it is not a system—is one among many proofs of the irresistible force with which speculative minds of the higher order are tempted into theorising. Bentham contended that the credibility of witnesses was reducible to a science. Siéyès, in a moment of expansion, exclaimed to Dumont, '*La politique est une science que je crois avoir achevée.*' If Mrs. Trollope heard aright, Prince Metternich said to her, 'I believe that the science of government might be reduced to principles, as certain as those of chemistry, if men, instead of theorising, would only take the trouble patiently to observe the uniform results of similar combinations of circumstances.'[1] And what are they to do next but theorise?

Just so, M. Taine. His royal road for arriving at the essences, the elemental truths, the final causes, the connecting links, of all things, is (to use his own words) 'wholly comprised in this remark, that moral matters, like physical things, have dependencies and conditions.' Take an individual writer, poet, novelist, or historian, and carefully study his works. They will all be found marked by 'a certain disposition of mind or soul, a certain array of likes and dislikes, of faculties and

[1] 'Vienna and the Austrians,' vol. ii. p. 11.

failings—in short, a certain psychological state, which is that of the author.' Then pass in review his life, his philosophy, his ethical and æsthetical code, *i.e.* his general views about the good and the beautiful, and you will find that they all depend upon one another; 'you will be able to prove logically that a particular quality, violence or sobriety of imagination, oratorical or lyrical aptitude, ascertained as regards one point, must extend its ascendency over the rest.' What is true of the individual, is true of a nation and an age: the age of Louis XIV., for example. Religion, art, philosophy—the family and the State—industry, commerce, and agriculture—have all some common principle, element, or ingredient, and might all be traced to the same moral and intellectual bent or tendency.

'Between an elm of Versailles, a philosophical and religious argument of Malebranche, one of Boileau's maxims in versification, one of Colbert's laws of hypothec, an ante-room compliment at Marly, a sentence of Bossuet on the royalty of God, the distance appears infinite and impassable. There is no apparent connection. The facts are so dissimilar that at first sight they are pronounced to be what they appear, that is to say, isolated and separated. But the facts communicate between themselves by the definitions of the groups in which they are comprised, like the waters in a basin by the summit of the heights whence they flow.

All this sounds very ingenious and very eloquent, but we do not see what good can be fairly expected to come of it, unless, as suggested by Mr. Rae, it should induce a nicer observation and more careful estimate of facts. What Condillac said of rules is applicable to M. Taine's method or system: like the parapet of a bridge, it may hinder a person from falling into the river, but will not help him on his way. Indeed, it is more likely to lure him out of it in will-o'-the-wisp fashion and land him in a slough; for the odds are that he will draw on his imagination for his dependencies and conditions: that the facts will be made to fit

the theory, instead of the theory being based upon the facts: that he will take for granted the connecting link or family likeness between the sermon and the compliment, the religious argument, the maxim of versification, and the elms.

It will be seen, as we proceed, that M. Taine attributes many points of national character, good, bad and indifferent, to the same cause as the exuberant growth and rich foliage of our trees: that he accounts on the same principle for the large feet of our women and the intemperance of our men. But for a Frenchman with a theory, he is a miracle of impartiality, acuteness, and good sense; and we may say of the English life depicted in his pages, what the merryman in the Prologue to 'Faust' says of human life: 'Every one lives it; to not many is it known; and, seize it where you will, it is interesting.' We may take up M. Taine at any stage of his progress, or we may begin with him at the beginning; steam with him up the Thames, and arrive with him on a cold foggy morning at London Bridge.

Sir Walter Scott states incidentally, in one of his novels, that much of the knowledge of life and character displayed in them was owing to his habit of talking freely with fellow-travellers, whether he had any previous acquaintance with them or not. M. Taine has the same habit. The first conversation he notes down is with an Englishman of the middle class, 'son of a merchant, I should suppose; he does not know French, German, or Italian; he is not altogether a gentleman—twenty-five years of age; sneering, decided, incisive face;—he has made for his amusement and instruction a trip lasting twelve months, and is returning from India and from Australia.' He is from Liverpool; and after laying down authoritatively that a family that does not keep a carriage may live comfortably there upon three or four hundred a year, goes on to say that 'one must marry, that is a matter of

course;' and that he hopes to be married within a year or two; adding, with commendable caution—'It is better, however, to remain a bachelor, if one does not meet the person with whom one desires to pass one's whole life;' 'but'—plucking up spirit—'one always meets with her; the only thing is not to let the chance slip.' A dowry he declares to be unnecessary: 'It is natural and even pleasant to undertake the charge of a portionless wife and of a family.' Moral: 'It is clear to me (*loquitur* M. Taine) that their happiness (the happiness of Englishmen) consists in being at home at six in the evening with a pleasing attached wife, having four or five children on their knees, and respectful domestics.' And by no means a bad notion of happiness either; but the deduction from such slender premises reminds us of our friend at Knebworth founding conclusions on the river and the pond.

'Other figures in the boat. Two young couples who remain on deck covered with wrappings under umbrellas. A long downpour has begun; they remain seated; in the end they were drenched like ducks. This was in order that husband and wife should not be separated by going below to the cabins.

'Another young wife suffered much from sea-sickness; her husband, who had the look of a merchant's clerk, took her in his arms, supported her, tried to read to her, tended her with a freedom and expression of infinite tenderness.

'Two young girls of fifteen and sixteen, who speak German and French exceedingly well and without accent, large restless eyes, large white teeth; they chatter and laugh with perfect unconstraint, with admirable petulance of friendly gaiety; *not the slightest trace of coquetry, none of our nice little tricks which have been learned and done on purpose;* they never think about the on-lookers.

'A lady of forty in spectacles beside her husband, in a worn-out dress, with relics of feminine ornaments, extraordinary teeth in the style of tusks, very serious and most ludicrous; *a Frenchwoman, even middle-aged, never forgets to adjust herself—to arrange her dress.*

'Patience and phlegm of a tall dry Englishman, who has not moved from the seat, has taken but a single turn, who has spoken to no one, who suffices to himself. As a contrast, three Frenchmen, who put random questions, make haphazard assertions, grow impatient, gesticulate, and make puns, or something akin to them, appeared to me pleasant fellows.'

We invite attention to these groups; for they are all representative, and each of them eventually, if unconsciously, supplies the keynote to a chapter or a carefully illustrated and expanded 'Note.' That they do so may be fairly cited by M. Taine in confirmation of his doctrine of dependencies; as showing that a competent observer might deduce the peculiarities and tendencies of a people from half-a-dozen examples, as surely as Professor Owen would infer the shape and habits of an animal from a bone.

The first day M. Taine passes in London, at all events the first of which he makes mention, happens to be Sunday; and he takes the Continental (we think superficial) view of our mode of observing it:—

'Sunday in London in the rain: the shops are shut, the streets almost deserted; the aspect is that of an immense and a well-ordered cemetery. The few passers-by, under their umbrellas, in the desert of squares and streets, have the look of uneasy spirits who have risen from their graves; it is appalling.

'I had no conception of such a spectacle, which is said to be frequent in London. The rain is small, compact, pitiless; looking at it one can see no reason why it should not continue to the end of all things; one's feet churn water, there is water everywhere, filthy water impregnated with an odour of soot. A yellow, dense fog fills the air, sweeps down to the ground; at thirty paces a house, a steamboat appear as spots upon blotting-paper. After an hour's walk in the Strand especially, and in the rest of the City, one has the spleen, one meditates suicide.'

In this frame of mind he calls Somerset House a

frightful thing; and after contemplating the British Museum and St. Paul's, exclaims: 'These spots are melancholy, being the decay of stone. And these nude statues in memory of Greece! Wellington is a fighting hero, naked, under the dripping trees of the park. The hideous Nelson stuck on his column, with a coil of rope in the form of a pigtail, like a rat impaled on the top of a pole. A swamp like this is a place of exile for the arts of antiquity. When the Romans disembarked here, they must have thought themselves in Homer's hell, in the land of the Cimmerians.' This assumes, of course, that the Romans disembarked like M. Taine on a wet Sunday, and took a stroll in a corresponding disposition through the Strand and the parks. 'But what is to be done on the day of rest? There is the church and the pothouse, intoxication and a sermon, insensibility and reflection, but no other way of spending a Sunday like this. I observe many doors ajar in the spirit vaults; sad faces, worn or wild, pass out and in. Let us visit the churches.'

He visits four in the morning, and two in the afternoon, staying out the sermon in two. The congregations impressed him rather favourably. 'They come to provision themselves with moral counsels, to refresh their principles. When reading the numerous essays in English literature, and the moralisings of the "Saturday Review," one perceives that common-places do not weary them.' He is pleased by finding the Book of Common Prayer, 'the mass-book of England,' on the ledges of the pews; and an anthem in Westminster Abbey suggests that 'worship thus understood is the *opera* of elevated, serious, and believing souls.' Was M. Taine the Frenchman who, on entering the vault under the great Pyramid, exclaimed: *Quel emplacement pour un billard!*

On returning to his hotel he reads the Queen's Proclamation, by which her loving subjects are prohibited

from playing at dice, cards, or any other game whatsoever on the Lord's Day, and the magistrates enjoined to prevent the publicans from selling liquors or permitting guests to remain in their houses in the time of Divine service:—

'This order is not strictly observed; the tavern doors are closed during service, but they can be opened, and drinking goes on in the back room. In any case this is a relic of the old Puritanism altogether distasteful in France. *Prohibit people to drink and amuse themselves on Sunday! But to a French workman, and to a peasant, Sunday appears to have been made for nothing else.* Stendhal said that here, in Scotland, in true Biblical countries, religion spoils one day out of seven, destroys the seventh part of possible happiness. He judges the Englishman, the man of the North, after the model of the man of the South, whom wine exhilarates and does not brutalise, who can without inconvenience give way to his instinct, and whose pleasure is poetical. Here the temperament is different, more violent and more combative; pleasure is a brutish and bestial thing: I could cite twenty examples of this. An Englishman said to me, "When a Frenchman is drunk, he chatters; when a German is drunk, he sleeps; when an Englishman is drunk, he fights."'

In other words, the only answer to Stendhal is that, if an Englishman were allowed the same liberty on Sundays as a Frenchman, he would get drunk and disorderly: that the primary use of Sunday observances is to keep him out of mischief; and that the French laxity in this particular is an infallible sign of the higher civilisation and happier temperament of the French. To test the soundness of this opinion let us take a wider range: let us extend the comparison to other countries besides England and France, and to other times beyond the present. Let it also be remembered that French Sundays are not invariably fine, nor English Sundays invariably wet: that the environs of this metropolis, on an average Sunday, offer much that is bright and cheering to compensate for its gloom.

The shop windows are closed, the streets are not alive with traffic, there are fewer handsome equipages, and fewer people of fashion in the parks. But whatever direction you take in the afternoon, you will see groups of men, women, and children, gaily dressed, and looking as if they thoroughly enjoyed their holiday, which most of them could not have at all if the shops were kept open, and the thronging carriages were driving about, and the usual weekday stir and brilliancy were kept up. Take your stand on London or Westminster Bridge and watch the crowded steamers; or go the round of the metropolitan railway stations and form a rough estimate of the thousands of pleasure-seekers who are starting for Richmond, Hampton Court, Epping Forest, Greenwich, or Blackheath. All the suburban villages and favourite places of resort, for an area of twelve miles round, present the same cheerful aspect. So do the country towns; and that the picture is frequently defaced by intemperance or disorderly conduct, we deny. Follow these groups or couples after their trip or stroll, and you will find most of them forming part of a family circle or enjoying a quiet chat round a tea-table.

The Parisian has his shops open, his innumerable cafés and restaurants, his theatres, and his races; but what proportion of the population are kept at work to minister to his gratification?—nay, are more hardly worked on that day, to add to it? If the question were to be decided, without reference to religion, by the greatest happiness of the greatest number, it must be decided against the French; and M. Taine is very much mistaken if he supposes that the English observance of Sunday, as generally understood and practised, is the result of bigotry. It is the result, like so many other English customs and institutions, of a wise compromise—a compromise between those who wish to make Sunday a mere festival, and those who would fain

convert it into a Pharisaical Sabbath. For more than a century after the Reformation, the Continental mode of keeping it prevailed in this country. In one of Queen Elizabeth's injunctions, Sunday is classed with other holidays; and it is declared that if, for any scrupulosity of conscience, some should superstitiously abstain from working on those days, they shall grievously offend. The 'Book of Sports' was a proclamation issued by James I. in 1618, specifying the recreations which were allowed after Divine service, including dancing, archery, and all athletic games.

It is no affair of Protestantism. Luther's opinion is pointedly expressed in his 'Table Talk:' 'If anywhere the day is made holy for the mere day's sake,—if any one anywhere sets up its observance on a Jewish foundation, then I order you to work on it, to ride on it, to dance on it, to feast on it, to do anything that shall remove this encroachment on Christian liberty.' Knox and Calvin took the same view. 'Upon Sunday, at night,' writes Randolph to Cecil from Edinburgh in 1562, 'the Duke supped with Mr. Knox, where the Duke desired I should be.' According to Disraeli the elder, 'At Geneva a tradition exists that, when John Knox visited Calvin on a Sunday, he found his austere coadjutor bowling on a green. At this day, and in that place, a Calvinist preacher, after his Sunday sermon, will take his seat at the card-table.'

The Scotch Calvinists have gone to the opposite extreme. They hold a Sunday walk to be unlawful; and it was actually proposed by a distinguished member of the Kirk to call in the interference of the police to prevent this peculiarly obnoxious mode of Sabbath-breaking.[1] In parts of Scotland, consequently, may

[1] At a meeting of the Edinburgh United Presbyterian Presbytery, Feb. 8th, 1860, reported in the 'Scotsman,' Dr. Johnston said, 'He should never forget what he saw when he was in Strasbourg. He had a letter of recommendation to a gentleman in Strasbourg—a good man.

actually be seen that state of things which M. Taine was thinking of when he said that an English Sunday left no alternative between dulness and intoxication, a state of things to which all England was reduced for an entire generation, and which, transplanted to the New World, was pushed to the *ne plus ultra* of absurdity.

A violent reaction in the ascetic direction had preceded the 'Book of Sports.' It was preached in Oxfordshire that to do any work on the Sabbath was as great a sin as to kill, or to commit adultery. It was preached in Somersetshire that to throw a bowl on the Sabbath Day was as great a sin as to commit murder. It was preached in Norfolk that to make a feast or wedding dinner on that day was as great a sin as for a father to take a knife to cut his son's throat. It was preached in Suffolk that to ring more bells than one on the Lord's day to call the people to church, was as great a sin as to do an act of murder.[1] This was at the beginning of the seventeenth century. It was impatience at not being able to enforce their doctrines or at being compelled witnesses, if not partakers, of profane pastimes, rather than political persecution, that caused the first emigration of the Puritans:

> 'The pilgrim bands, who crossed the sea to keep
> Their Sabbaths in the eye of God alone
> In his wide temple of the wilderness.'

He delivered his letter in the afternoon of the Lord's Day: the servant told him that his master was walking with his lady on the ramparts, and he found it was the common custom of the Christians in Strasbourg to walk on the ramparts.' Mr. Parlane, of Tranent: 'Why did you deliver the letter on that day?' Dr. Johnston: 'I can explain that, if it is necessary. It was a work of necessity.' His explanation was a halting one, and his delivery of the letter appears to have been deemed the greater atrocity of the two. Dr. Johnston would have found things worse in Protestant Sweden, where counting-houses are kept open and bills discounted on Sundays.

[1] Strype—quoted by Dr. Hessey in his Bampton Lectures on 'Sunday: Its origin, history, and present obligation.' These lectures comprise almost everything that can be said or brought to bear upon the subject,

The spirit of the Sabbatarian legislation, when uncontrolled, may be inferred from a few articles in the Transatlantic Codes or Regulations collected by Dr. Hessey:—

'No one shall run on the Sabbath Day, or walk in his garden, or elsewhere, except reverently to and from meeting.

'No one shall travel, cook victuals, make beds, sweep house, cut hair, or shave on the Sabbath Day.

'No woman shall kiss her child on the Sabbath or Fasting Day.

'If any man shall kiss his wife, or wife her husband, on the Lord's Day, the party in fault shall be punished at the discretion of the magistrates.'

The Puritan doctrine was extravagant enough to justify the pungent satire of Drunken Barnaby, if no cat was actually hanged on Monday for killing of a mouse on Sunday;[1] whilst the looseness of the Restoration was a melancholy commentary on the tendency of mankind to take refuge from one extreme in another and haply a worse. Evelyn's description of the Court on the last Sunday but one of Charles II.'s reign may be taken as a sample:

'Jan. 25, 1665. Dr. Dove preach'd before y^e^ King. I saw this evening such a scene of profane gaming, and the

and the notes are full of curious information and valuable references. See also Cox's 'Literature of the Sabbath Question.'

There is no point on which Dr. Hessey is more convincing than in showing that the Fourth Commandment is not applicable, either in letter or spirit, to the Christian Sunday. 'Both Scripture and the Fathers speak of the Lord's Day as distinct from the Sabbath. Both Scripture and the Fathers speak of the Sabbath as done away.' p. 175.

[1] 'Veni Banbury, O profanum!
Ubi vidi Puritanum
Felem facientem furem,
Quod Sabbatho stravit murem.'

'To Banbury came I, O profane one!
Where I saw a Puritane one
Hanging of his cat on Monday
For killing of a mouse on Sunday.'

King in the midst of his three concubines, as I had never before seen. Luxurious dallying and profaneness.'

This profanation of the day did not extend far beyond the Court circle. Although during this reign Parliament occasionally met on Sunday, the principal statute, still in force, 'for the better observance of the Lord's Day' (29 Car. II. c. 71) was passed in 1676: respect for the Church was as essential a part of the Cavalier faith as loyalty to the King; and both before and after the Revolution, the Sunday at most country houses was got through in much the same fashion as at Osbaldistone Hall:

'The next morning chanced to be Sunday, a day peculiarly hard to be got rid of at Osbaldistone Hall; for after the formal religious service of the morning had been performed, *at which all the family regularly attended*, it was hard to say upon which individual, Rashleigh and Miss Vernon excepted, the fiend of *ennui* descended with the most abundant outpouring of his spirit. . . . "And since we talk of heraldry (said Sir Hildebrand) I'll go and read Gwillym." This resolution he intimated with a yawn, resistless as that of the goddess in the Dunciad, which was responsively echoed by his giant sons as they dispersed in quest of the pastimes to which their several minds inclined them: Percie to discuss a pot of beer with the steward in the gallery—Thorncliff to cut a pair of cudgels and fix them in their wicker hilts—John to dress May-flies—Dickon to play at pitch-and-toss by himself, his right hand against his left—and Wilfrid to bite his thumbs and hum himself into a slumber which should last to dinner-time, if possible.'

This easy, indifferent, and yet not wholly irreverent mode of passing Sunday lasted through the eighteenth century and far into the nineteenth. Lord Stanhope, in his Chapter on Methodism, quotes this passage from the 'Life of the Rev. William Grimshaw,' who joined the Methodists, and stood high with them: 'He endeavoured to suppress the generally prevailing custom in country places during the summer of walking in the

fields on a Lord's Day, between the services, or in the evening in companies. He not only bore his testimony against it from the pulpit, but reconnoitred the fields in person to detect and reprove delinquents.' [1]

This excess of zeal did more harm than good. During the entire reign of George III., of pious and decorous memory, lawyers had their consultations by preference on Sunday: Cabinet dinners were most frequent on that day; and ladies of quality gave regular Sunday card-parties without reproach. It is related of Lord Melbourne, during a visit to the Archbishop of York at Nuneham, that when his right reverend host suggested an attendance at evening service in addition to morning, he replied, 'No, my lord, once is orthodox; twice is Puritanical.' This was long the prevalent tone and mode of thinking of the higher class, who have leaned of late to a stricter observance of the day with the especial object of making it a day of rest for their domestics and dependents. But, out of Scotland, there has been no national backsliding into Puritanism; and our Sunday has been held up to imitation by earnest and able writers in Germany and France. An imperial chaplain, the Abbé Mullois, in the palmy days of the Second Empire, emphatically called upon his countrymen to exchange their '*Dimanche égoïste, scélérat et débraillé sans cœur et sans pitié*,' for 'the respectable, beneficent and humane Sunday of England.' [2]

This slight historical retrospect may help to clear away the popular misapprehensions which abound,

[1] 'History of England,' chap. xix.—a model of lucid compression.

[2] The circumstance that so many of the Peninsular battles, and notoriously Waterloo, were fought on a Sunday, is thus accounted for by M. Esquiros: 'Knowing the respect of the English for the rest of the seventh day, the French generals hoped to profit by it in their attacks. I confess that they had not always reason to praise their calculations, for the English troops gloriously broke the Sabbath. They thus justified the proverb current in Great Britain, 'The better the day, the better the deed.'—'The English at Home,' vol. ii. 263. The duel between Pitt and Tierney was fought on a Sunday.

both at home and abroad, touching the nature and extent of the obligation which (speaking generally) the English people deem binding on them to keep one day in the week free for worship, rest, and harmless recreation. They are no more answerable for the perversion of Biblical authority by the northern Pharisees, than M. Taine is answerable for the vandalism of the Parisian Commune. To complete the charge of Puritanism, he confounds things essentially distinct:

'Other traces of Puritanical severity, among the rest, are the recommendations on the stairs which lead down to the Thames, and elsewhere: one is requested to be decent. At the railway-station there are large Bibles fastened to chains for the use of passengers while waiting for the train. A tall, sallow, and bony fellow handed to me two printed pages on the brazen serpent of Moses, with applications to the present life: "You, too, O reader, have been bitten by the fiery serpents. To heal yourself, lift up your eyes to Him who has been elevated as the sign of salvation." Other tokens denote an aristocratic country. At the gate of St. James's Park is the following notice: "The park-keepers have orders to prevent all beggars from entering the gardens, and all persons in ragged or dirty clothes, or who are not outwardly decent and well-behaved." *At every step one feels oneself further removed from France.*'

Here, regard to decency, religious enthusiasm, and inequality of condition, are all lumped together; and the combination is so offensive to the refined, fastidious, cosmopolitan Frenchman, that, at every step, he feels farther removed from France, and (like Goldsmith's traveller) 'drags at each remove a length'ning chain.'

During the first quarter of the century the best-bred people swore. One of Lord Melbourne's pithy sayings would hardly be deemed authentic without an oath. His reply to Lord Normanby's request for a marquisate begins: 'I didn't think you could be such a d——d fool.' According to Lord Houghton, Sydney Smith 'checked the strong old-fashioned freedom of

speech in Lord Melbourne by suggesting that they should assume everybody and everything to be damned, and come to the subject.' Judges swore both on and off the bench. Mr. Justice Best (the first Lord Wynford) during the trial of Carlisle for blasphemy, audibly exclaimed to a brother judge: 'I'll be d——d to h–ll if I sit here to hear the Christian religion abused.' Lord Eldon was in the habit of revising drafts of Bills during prayers in the House of Lords. He had just risen from his knees, when in reply to an ironical comment of Lord Grey, he said, 'D—n it, my lord, you'd do the same if you were as hard-worked as I am.'

The Duke of Cumberland (afterwards King of Hanover) has been overheard assuring an Archbishop of Canterbury of his attachment to the Church in language which might well have made the pious prelate's hair stand on end. The habit clung longest to royal personages; but although it has gradually died out, we have hardly yet arrived at the degree of strictness described by M. Guizot and M. Taine. M. Guizot states, in his 'Memoirs,' that, having repeated in company the well-known apothegm, 'Hell is paved with good intentions,' he was taken to task by a lady, who told him that the word 'Hell' was too serious a word to be introduced into general conversation. The lady probably was merely quoting Swift:

'We never mention Hell to ears polite.'

'Particular oaths,' observes M. Taine, 'such as *Dieu me damne*,' are odious, and nothing is accepted as an excuse for employing them. A young Frenchman of my acquaintance here, when rowing some persons in a boat, made a false move, whereby he fell backwards, letting slip the forbidden oath. The ladies of the party were astounded, and gazed intently upon the water: one of the gentlemen laughed outright, while the two others flushed like young girls. This religious

prudery often leads to hypocrisy.' Very likely, where it exists. But is M. Taine quite sure that the forbidden oath, which made the ladies look down and two of the gentlemen blush, was nothing more than *Dieu me damne?* which, by the way, sounds much coarser in English than in French. May not the young Frenchman have let slip another kind of expletive?

Climate, we have been told, aggravates the evils of an English Sunday, by leaving the unoccupied tradesman or mechanic no refuge but a dram; and climate, we find, is the cause of our ingrained heaviness, homeliness, dulness, habitual depression, common-place unimaginative way of living, and bad taste. Occasionally M. Taine bids fair to rival the traveller who said that Nature had adapted the Irish of the bog-districts to their bogs by making them web-footed. After referring to primogeniture and the large number of children in which English couples rejoice, as stimulants to exertion, he continues:

'Second cause, the climate; I always recur to this, because there is no greater power. Consider that this humidity and this fog existed, and even worse, under the Saxon kings, and that this race has lived amid them, as far as can be traced, even in its earliest country on the coasts of the Elbe and of Jutland. At Manchester, last winter, one of my friends informed me that in the principal hotel of that city it was necessary to keep the gas burning for five days; at midday it was not clear enough to see to write; the sixth day the fog still lasted, but the supply of gas was exhausted. During six months, and during several days in the other months, this country seems to have been made for wild ducks.'

The ideal under this sky is comfort; 'a dry, clean, well-warmed habitation; a solid succulent dinner; a chat with a faithful wife, dressed with care; rosy-cheeked children, well washed and in clean clothes.' Given these, the average Englishman believes that all

the possible wants, bodily and mental, of an intellectual being are provided for:—

'On the contrary, in Provence, in Italy, in southern countries, the ideal is lounging in the shade, on a terrace, in the open air, *with a mistress*, before a noble landscape, amid the perfume of roses, amid statues and the music of instruments. In order to relish delicately the beauty of the light, the balmy air, the delicious fruits, and the configuration of the landscape, the senses have but to expand themselves; here the climate closes them, and, by dint of repressing, blunts them. Take an example in little: a poor person at Marseilles, or at Milan, buys a pound of grapes for a halfpenny, worthy of being placed on the table of gods, and thus he acquires the idea of exquisite sensation. How can you suppose that a like idea can be engendered in the brain of one whose palate knows nothing beyond a morsel of meat and a glass of gin or of ale? Shut out from this path, the man never dreams of fine and sensual enjoyment; he would not understand how to essay it: he is hardened, stiffened, habituated to the exigencies and hardship of his lot.'

In this, as in many other places, M. Taine forgets to draw the essential distinction between classes. The well-to-do Englishman may surely aspire to some higher enjoyment than mere warmth and food, although he may prefer sitting in a comfortable drawing-room with a wife to lounging on a terrace with a mistress. But let us confine ourselves, for the moment, to the comparative condition of the lower class:—

'A poor person is not wretched in the South; he obtains the most beautiful and the best things gratis, the necessaries of life for next to nothing, so many things which are necessaries in the North he does not need: abundance of nourishment, artificial light, fire, a well-protected dwelling, warm clothing, frequent changes of linen, and much more. Here is a painful sight. Nothing can be more horrible than the coat, the lodging, the shirt, the form of an English beggar; in Hyde Park, on Sunday, when a poor family sits on the grass, it makes a stain. Possess 20,000*l.* in the Funds here, or else cut your throat; such is the idea which constantly

haunts me, and the omnibus advertisements suggest it still more in informing me that "Mappin's celebrated razors cost only one shilling."'

Eothen, after describing the burial of a pilgrim at Jerusalem, remarks: 'I did not say Alas!—nobody ever does that I know of, though the word is so frequently written. I thought the old man had got rather well out of the scrape of being alive and poor.' This reflection was general, and made under a genial Asiatic sky. Is a Southern beggar a less painful sight than a Northern beggar? or does a Neapolitan lazzarone stand higher in the scale of thinking beings than an English peasant or mechanic? A sensual animal life, with the unrestrained indulgence of its instincts and its wants, is more degrading than hunger or cold: the call for exertion and the need of self-restraint are improving not lowering influences; and if to have the minimum of conventional wants, to be able to dispense with a well-protected dwelling and frequent changes of linen, is the *beau idéal* of existence, we must repair, like 'the Earl and the Doctor,' to the South Sea Islands to look for it. There is no country of Europe where an out-of-door life, with thin clothing and a bunch of grapes or a melon for nutriment, is endurable for more than a limited portion of the year. The working-class in our most populous districts, the centres of manufacturing industry, where coal may be had for the asking, suffer less from the cold than the peasantry, including the peasant proprietors, in many departments of France.

The scarcity of fuel at Paris, and the resulting amount of privation, are well known. 'Nor let it be thought that Parisian gaiety is owing entirely to a Parisian climate. They who are now watching the weather-glass in our land of fogs, may like to know that the Parisians themselves have, in the way of weather, something to complain of. Paris has in the

year (on an average of twenty years) but one hundred and twenty-six days tolerably fine.[1] The variability of the English climate confounds averages; but it is an admitted fact that there is no country in the world where from equability of temperature, it is possible to be so much in the open air without suffering from hot, cold, wet, or dry; and the beneficial effects are frankly admitted by M. Taine. He is never more eloquent or poetical than when expatiating on the advantages of humidity:

'I have paid many visits, and taken several walks. The things which please me most are the trees. Every day, after leaving the Athenæum, I go and sit for an hour in St. James's Park; the lake shines softly beneath its misty covering, while the dense foliage bends over the still waters. The rounded trees, the great green domes, make a kind of architecture far more delicate than the other. The eye reposes itself upon these softened forms, upon these subdued tones. These are beauties, but tender and touching, those of foggy countries, of Holland.'

His enthusiasm rekindles when he takes his stand on the Suspension Bridge on a fine evening to gaze and meditate:—

'There are tones like these in the landscapes of Rembrandt, in the twilights of Van der Neer! the bathed light, the air charged with vapour, the insensible and continuous changes of the vast exhalation which softens, imparts a bluish tint to, and dims the contours, the whole producing the impression of a great life, vague, diffused, and melancholy—the life of a humid country.'

At Richmond, again, on the very spot where the Duke of Argyll paused to point out the unrivalled landscape to Jeanie Deans, M. Taine breaks out:—

[1] Bulwer's (Lord Dalling's) 'France: Social, Literary, Political,' vol. i. p. 66, where the statistical details are given. French taste for external nature was well represented by Madame de Staël, when she languished for *la belle France* on the banks of the Rhine.

'A sort of fond quietude emanates from the air, the sky, and all things; Nature welcomes the soul, weary and worn with striving. How one feels that their landscape suits them, and why they love it! Without doubt their climate befits trees, and, besides, they have had no invasion or popular rising to mutilate or cut them down; the national taste has favoured their preservation; olden things have been more respected and better preserved than in France, and among them must be numbered the trees.'

But the Frenchman is yet to be born who can dissociate the sublime and beautiful from the artificial or conventional. When Voltaire was told how well his trees looked, he replied that, like fine ladies and gentlemen, they had nothing else to do; and M. Taine thinks that the charm of flowers and foliage is enhanced by their resemblance to a cluster of Parisian beauties in all the glitter and glory of diamonds, crinoline, and bare shoulders. Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of *these*:—

'They have the tint of a beautiful lady; they, too, are patricians developed, preserved, embellished by all the refinements of art and of luxury; I have had the same impression at a full-dress morning party, before a staircase filled from top to bottom with young laughing ladies in swelling and sweeping dresses of tulle, of silk, the head covered with diamonds, the shoulders bare. This was a unique sensation, that of splendour and brilliancy carried to the highest pitch —all the flowers of civilisation and of nature in a single bouquet and in a single perfume.'

A French traveller in Ireland, after trying the whisky, sets down: '*Le vin du pays est diablement fort.*' M. Taine finds the same fault with all English eatables and drinkables alike. 'All their common wines are very hot, very spirituous, and loaded with brandy. If they were pure, they would consider them insipid; our Bordeaux wines, and even our Burgundies, are too light for them. To please them it is necessary that the beverage should be rough and fiery: their

palate must be either scratched or scraped.' He takes no account of the demand for Gladstone claret, which is light enough in all conscience; and he assumes throughout that the taste for stimulants is peculiar to us children of the fog. Did he never hear of the 'liquoring-up' of the United States, the *schnapps* of Germany, or the absinthe-drinkers of his native land, who belong to the same category as the Turkish or Chinese opium-eaters? He is still more severe on our cookery:

'I have purposely dined in twenty taverns, from the lowest to the highest, in London and elsewhere. I got large portions of fat meat and vegetables, without sauce; one is amply and wholesomely fed, but one has no pleasure in eating. In the best Liverpool eating-house they do not know how to dress a fowl. If you would tickle your palate, there is a cruet filled with pickles, peppers, sauces, and Chili vinegar. I once inadvertently put two drops of it into my mouth. I might as well have swallowed a hot cinder. At Greenwich, having already partaken of plain whitebait, I helped myself to some out of a second dish; it was devilled, and fitted for skinning the tongue.'

According to him, the English make up for quality by quantity: 'They consider us sober; yet we ought to consider them voracious. Economists say that, on an average, a Frenchman eats a sheep and a half yearly, and an Englishman four sheep. At the tables of the eating-houses you are served with a small piece of bread along with a very large helping of meat.' He does not say 'raw meat,' as a Frenchman of the old *régime* would have said; for the French have adopted the worst fault they were wont to find in our cookery, that of serving the meat underdone. A Frenchman, dining with an Englishman, let drop, 'I eat a great deal of bread with my meat.' 'Yes,' was the reply, 'and a great deal of meat with your bread.'

The comparative consumption of animal food in a

country cannot be decided by the average consumption of sheep in England, any more than by the average consumption of veal in Germany or of *filets de bœuf* in France. Assuming that we do consume a greater amount of animal food of all sorts, this, again, would prove no more than that the bulk of our population are better off. 'Fifty years ago,' says M. Taine, 'meat was a luxury among the peasants; they ate it but once a week; in winter they had salt meat only. Now they require fresh meat every day; and England, which produces so much of it, is obliged, in addition, to procure it from abroad.' If this were true (which, we are sorry to say, it is not) the four sheep a day might be accounted for without any imputation of coarse feeding or voracity. Lady Morgan, who had an antagonistic theory of French appetites, tells a story of a little Frenchwoman at a German *table-d'hôte* exclaiming, '*Mon Dieu, j'ai mangé pour quatre*;' which, adds Lady Morgan, was not far from the truth.

The physiological and psychological effects of diet are a matter of every-day remark. Kean's dinner was regularly adapted to his part: he ate pork when he had to play tyrants; beef, for murderers; boiled mutton, for lovers. Byron, seeing Moore sedulously occupied with an underdone beefsteak, inquired, 'Are you not afraid of committing murder after such a meal?' M. Taine, therefore, has high authority in his favour when he traces our national character to our carnivorous habits. Adopting some passages from Mr. Froude, he calls the English 'a sturdy, high-hearted race, sound in body and fierce in spirit, and furnished with thews and sinews, which, under the stimulus of those great shins of beef, their common diet, were the wonder of the age.'

'Invariably, by friend and foe alike, the English are described as the fiercest people in all Europe (the English wild beasts Benvenuto Cellini calls them), and this great physical

power they owed to the profuse abundance in which they lived, and the soldier's training in which every man of them was bred from childhood.'

The Bishop of Peterborough was not afraid to declare from the Episcopal Bench in the House of Lords that, if driven to the alternative, he would rather that the people were free than sober. An Englishman with whom M. Taine conversed at 'the Derby,' disapproved of temperance societies, vowed that the race required stimulants, and maintained that even in India, where he had lived for five years, the entire abandonment of spirituous liquors would be a mistake. 'Our sailors cannot do without their glass of spirits. We are eminently an energetic people; we require strong meat and drink to sustain our frames; without them we should have no animal spirits; it is on account of this régime that our mariners are so hardy and so brave. When they board, after discharging their pistols, they fling them at random on the enemy's deck, saying that they are certain to find them again after the victory.'

M. Taine more than half agrees with him: 'Certain organisations are prodigal: there are chimneys which draw badly unless the fire be great; besides, the climate, the fog, the large expenditure of physical and mental labour, necessitate copious repasts. Mr. Pitt did not find two bottles of port-wine too large a quantity to take with his dinner.' Lord Stanhope will be surprised to learn that this habit of Mr. Pitt's, supposed to have been brought on by the weakness of his digestive organs, was nothing but a peculiarity of race.

How happens it that in describing the English diet, with its effects, M. Taine is silent as to beer, which M. Esquiros, an equally well-informed if less dashing and original observer, terms the national drink?—

'Beer has inspired their poets, their artists, their great actors; they remember the tavern near Temple Bar, where

Swift, Addison, Garth, and Steele met. An English workman who had been engaged for a long time in a wine-producing country, said to me, after describing all his sufferings and privations, "If John Bull forgot his beer, he would forget his country: but, before he came to that, his tongue would cleave to the roof of his mouth."

'The English attribute to the use of this liquid the iron muscles of their labouring classes, who struggle so valiantly, afloat and ashore, in factories and vessels, for the power of Great Britain: they even attribute their victories to it. "Beer and wine," an orator exclaimed at a meeting where I was present, "met at Waterloo: wine red with fury, boiling over with enthusiasm, mad with andacity, rose thrice against that hill on which stood a wall of immovable men, the sons of beer. You have read history: beer gained the day."'

He calls ale the wife of porter, and includes both under the generic term, beer:

'One of the consequences of this double alimentary beverage is their substitution for bread among the northern people: and we shall not feel surprised at such a dietetic result if we reflect that beer contains, in a liquid form, the same substantial principles which the produce of our bakeries contains in a solid form. The Latin races eat bread: the Saxon drink it.'

A Turkish officer who came over to attend the autumn manœuvres complained of headache at Aldershot. An army doctor was called in, and making no allowance for southern constitutions, gave him six grains of blue pill and a black dose. The consequence was that he was utterly unable to take the field, and remained at his quarters, looking very like a sick monkey: an animal who is no more disposed than a true believer to regard sickness as a kindly dispensation, and always looks very sorry for himself. We suspect that M. Taine was once ill-advised enough to follow a similar prescription, for he says that the medicines here might be compounded for French horses. 'If you ask a chemist for a purge, he hands calomel to

you; an Englishman often keeps it by him, and takes a pill of it when his head feels rather heavy.'

Let us now reverse the picture. This combined system of meat, drink, and physic produces calmness, presence of mind, solidity, laconic forms of expression. 'An officer relates that an English admiral, after a long fight, forced the enemy's vessel to strike, and received the captain, whom he had made prisoner, on the poop with the single phrase, "Fortune of war."' A friend of the author's writes that his coachman the other day thought fit to rattle down a mews in full speed. He frightened two carriage-horses which were being harnessed to a carriage. The groom advanced, took hold of the bits, and calmed the horses. Not a single word passed between these men. 'Picture to yourself the same scene in France. The taunts of the lackey, proud of his master, the blackguardism of the jealous menial,' &c. One would have thought that this picture was favourable to England. But this is not the opinion of M. Taine's friend, nor, it would seem, of M. Taine himself, when quoting the remainder of the letter:—

'That is, my dear friend, what I have seen of most significance in England, and by means of which I figure to myself English liberty. These people have water mixed with their blood, exactly as their cattle are deficient in juice. Compare the gigots of St. Léonard with those of London. That is why they are allowed to combine together, to brawl, to print what they please. They are primitive animals, cold-blooded, and with a sluggish circulation.'

They will not even allow that our mutton, of which we eat so much, is better than their own! It is its want of juiciness that makes us cold-blooded, and deprives us of the excitability which so advantageously distinguishes the French. Therefore is it that we have adopted a different and lower basis for the moral principle:

'In France it is based on the sentiment of honour; in

England on the idea of duty. Now, the former is rather arbitrary; its reach varies in different persons. One piques himself upon being rigid on a certain point, and thinks himself free on all the rest; in the circle of bad actions, he cuts off a segment from which he excludes himself; but this part varies according to his preferences—for example, he will be truthful in speaking, but not in writing, or the reverse. My honour consists of that wherein I place my glory, and I can place it in this as well as in that. On the contrary, the idea of duty is strict, and does not admit of the slightest compromise.'

This makes us (male and female) matter-of-fact, unimaginative, uninteresting, common-place; although it may certainly conduce to sundry prosaic qualities, such as constancy in women, or patient endurance, firmness, and intrepidity in men:—

'A French officer who fought in the Crimea related to me how an English battalion of infantry destroyed two Russian regiments; the Russians fired incessantly, and did not lose a foot of ground, but they were excited and aimed badly; on the contrary, the English infantry avoided undue haste, took steady aim, and missed scarcely a single shot. The human being is ten times stronger when his pulse continues calm, and when his judgment remains free.'

In the late war the chassepot was a much superior weapon to the needle-gun; but its longer range became a positive disadvantage through the vivacity of the French, who frequently fired away all their ammunition before they had got near enough to take aim. Mr. Kinglake relates that, before the battle of the Alma had well commenced, swarms of French skirmishers were firing with a briskness and vivacity that warmed the blood of the many thousands of hearers then new to war. 'A young officer, kindling at the sound and impatient that the French should be first in action, could not help calling Lord Raglan's attention to it. But the stir of French skirmishers through thick

ground was no new music to Lord Fitzroy Somerset: rather, perhaps, it recalled him for a moment to old times in Estremadura and Castile, when, at the side of the great Wellesley, he learned the brisk ways of Napoleon's infantry. So, when the young officer said, "The French, my lord, are warmly engaged," Lord Raglan answered, "Are they? I cannot catch any return fire." His practised ear had told him what we now know to be the truth. No troops were opposed to the advance of Bosquet's columns in this part of the field.' M. Taine states that 'in the Crimea the French wounded recovered less frequently than the English, because they resigned themselves less rapidly.'

Montalembert, in his '*L'Avenir Politique*,' expatiates enthusiastically on an incident in our military annals as showing what habits of discipline and deep sense of duty can effect:—

'Who can ever forget the example of antique magnanimity and Christian abnegation given some years since by the whole of an English regiment swallowed up in a shipwreck! It had been embarked on board the frigate "Birkenhead," bound for the Cape of Good Hope. The vessel struck upon a rock at a short distance from her destination. The means of transport only sufficed to land the women and children and a few infirm passengers. Officers and soldiers take to their arms, and draw up in order of battle on the poop, whilst the partial landing is effected, and also whilst the vessel is slowly sinking beneath the waves. Not one of those young, strong, armed men attempts to take the place of the weak, who are to survive, and the regiment descends, entire into the abyss, martyrs of obedience and charity. To my mind, the name "Birkenhead," and the date of this shipwreck, would figure on the colours of this regiment by as good a title as the most brilliant victories.'

The troops on board (13 officers, 9 sergeants, 466 men) consisted of detachments from ten regiments; and a great number of the soldiers were drowned in their berths directly after the ship struck. According to

the narrative of Captain (afterwards Lieut.-Colonel) Wright, the senior of four officers who were saved, 'all the officers received their orders and had them carried out, as if the men were embarking instead of going to the bottom : there was only this difference, that I never saw any embarcation conducted with so little noise and confusion. When the vessel was just about going down, the commander called out, "All those who can swim jump overboard, and make for the boats." We begged the men not to do as the commander said, as the boats with the women must be swamped. Not more than three made the attempt.' Some reached the shore by swimming, or on spars. The commanding officer, Lieut.-Colonel Seton, of the 74th, went down with his men.

A passage in one of M. de Tocqueville's conversations with Senior[1] throws light upon the question whether honour, as understood in France, or duty, as understood in England, is the surest guide, prompter, safeguard, or security :—

'A Frenchman is never bold when he is on the defensive. A few hundreds of the lowest street rabble, without arms or leader, will attack an established government, raise barricades under fire, and die content if they have enjoyed the excitement of bloodshed and riot. Two hundred thousand men, armed, disciplined, seem paralysed if the law is on their side, and they are required not to attack but to resist. Their cowardice when they are in the right is as marvellous as their courage when they are in the wrong. Perhaps the reason is that, in the former case, they cannot rely on one another ; in the latter case they can.'

Their cowardice (the term is M. de Tocqueville's) when on the defensive was most marvellous in the late war, when three times over they capitulated by hundreds of thousands without one determined effort to

[1] 'Correspondence and Conversations of Alexis de Tocqueville with William Nassau Senior.' Edited by M. C. M. Simpson. A book replete with knowledge and reflection.

break out. The duty of a commander-in-chief similarly situated to Napoleon the Third at Sedan, or Marshal Bazaine at Metz, was distinctly laid down by Napoleon the First, after the capitulation of General Dupont at Baylen, with 20,000 men, in 1808. When the news reached the Emperor, at Bordeaux, he was stunned by it as by a blow. 'Is your Majesty ill?' asked Maret, on being hastily summoned. 'No.' 'Has Austria declared war?' 'Would to God it were only that.' 'What, then, has happened?' The Emperor then related the capitulation, and added: 'That an army should be beaten is nothing; the fate of arms is variable, and a defeat may be repaired. But for an army to make a shameful capitulation is a stain on the French name—on the glory of our arms. The wounds inflicted on honour never heal—the moral effect is terrible. . . . They say that there was no other means of saving the army, of preventing the massacre of the soldiers. Well, it would have been better for them all to have perished with their arms in their hands—that not one of them had returned.' [1]

Three Marshals, 6000 officers, and 173,000 men were made prisoners at Metz, including 16,000 of the Imperial Guard—the Guard *qui meurt et ne se rend pas.* Never before in the world's history did anything like that number of the troops of any country allow themselves to be cooped up till the iron circle was drawn round them, or remain cowed within it 'as the Tinchel cows the deer.' Napoleon III. told an English statesman that, with the exception of some military dash, the French were not a brave nation. They certainly were not under his régime: and making every allowance for bad leadership—for mal-administration, corruption, and incapacity—it is difficult to recognise in them the same nation whose proud boast it was that their national flag, the Tricolour, had

[1] Thibadeau, vol. iii. p. 439.

made the tour of Europe on the Car of Victory. [1] The deterioration of race is so marked that moralists and physiologists have endeavoured to account for it by a combination of moral and physical causes: by the effects of the conscript system under the First Empire: and by the demoralising influence of the theories of sexual intercourse notoriously prevalent and practically carried out in France. Both causes have been in operation; but, in point of fact, the French were always wanting in the calmness, firmness, and self-reliance which constitute the highest kind of bravery. What would have been the effect on a French regiment of the exhortation addressed by the Duke to the 81st, at the battle of the Nivelle: 'You must stand firm, my lads, for there is nothing behind you?' Or suppose the position and composition of the contending armies at Waterloo had been reversed. Suppose an army of more than 71,000 picked British troops had attacked a scratch army of 68,000 containing less than 30,000 French—how long would the defensive positions in and about Hougomont and La Haye Sainte have been maintained? [2]

Since the comparison has been frequently challenged or invited, let us proceed with it. We hardly know an instance in which the English were beaten by the

[1] Lamartine's words at the Hôtel de Ville in 1848, when he contrasted the tricolour with the red. Who was the lady that, in allusion to the reluctance of the Comte de Chambord to surrender the white flag, said, '*Ce pauvre Prince, avec son drapeau blanc, me fait l'effet de Virginie, qui s'est laissée noyer plutôt que laisser tomber sa chemise?*'

[2] It was a stern meeting between 71,947 brave men on one side, all homogeneous and confident in their leader, and 67,655 on the other: the latter a motley host made up of Belgians, Dutchmen, Brunswickers, Hanoverians, the troops of Nassau, and, though last not least, of 22,000 British soldiers. The brunt of the action fell, as was to be expected, on the English and the gallant German legion'—(Gleig's 'Life of the Duke of Wellington.') 'I really believe that, with the exception of the old Spanish infantry, I have got not only the worst troops, but the worst equipped army, with the worst staff, that ever was brought together'—(The Duke of Wellington's Despatch, 25th June, 1815.)

French, nation against nation, in a pitched battle by land or sea. What have they (except the combats under the Maid of Orleans) to set against Crécy, Poitiers, Agincourt, Quebec, Wandewash, Alexandria, Maida, Albuera, Corunna, Talavera, Salamanca, Vittoria, La Hogue, Rodney's victory in 1782, the Nile? We name only battles in which the force on each side was essentially homogeneous. It was a combined fleet (French and Spanish) that was destroyed at Trafalgar; and Waterloo might have been a pitched battle without the Prussians. But Napoleon's well-authenticated words to Comte Flahaut the night after the battle were: '*Ça a toujours fini de même depuis Crécy.*'

Neither Marlborough's nor William the Third's battles should count, having been respectively won and lost by allied armies of which less than one-third was British. But, speaking of the decisive charge of the *Maison du Roi* at Steinkirk, Macaulay says: 'They (the English) never ceased to repeat that if Solmes[1] had done his duty by them, they would have beaten even the Household.' If, again, the British had been properly supported at Fontenoy, they would have beaten even Saxe.

One marked superiority of the English is their capacity for fighting in line. In the battle of Wandewash, between Coote and Lally, in 1760, a French regiment in column attacked an English regiment drawn up in line, and, after receiving a heavy fire, broke through: then the English closed in upon their flanks, mingled with them, and utterly destroyed them as a force.[2]

Marshal Bugeaud told General Trochu that, although during the Peninsular war he had sometimes defeated the English in isolated encounters and by *coups-de-main* of which he had the preparation and direction,

[1] 'Let us see what sport these British bulldogs will make,' was the remark of Solmes, when urged to advance to their support.—*Burnet.*

[2] Mill's 'History of British India,' vol. iii. p. 25.

he had the mortification to witness only a small number of combined operations in which the English army did not get the better of the French. The reason, he added, was obvious. The French invariably attacked under conditions which almost always succeeded against the Spaniards, but almost always failed against the English.

'Arrived at a thousand yards from the English line, our soldiers began exchanging their ideas in agitation, and hastening their march so as to show a beginning of disarray. The English, silent, with grounded arms, presented in their impassible immovability the aspect of a long red wall: an imposing aspect, which never failed to impress the novices. Soon, the distances becoming less, repeated cries of "*Vive l'Empereur! En avant! A la baïonnette!*" sounded from our ranks; the shakos were raised on the muzzles of the muskets, the march became a run, the ranks were getting mixed, the agitation became tumult; many fired as they marched. The English line, always silent and motionless, and always with grounded arms, even when we were not more than 300 yards off, seemed not to be aware of the storm about to burst upon it. . . .

'At this moment of painful expectation, the English wall moved. They were making ready. An indefinable impression fixed to the spot a good many of our soldiers, who began an uncertain fire. That of the enemy, concentrated and precise, was crushing. Decimated, we fell back, seeking to recover our equilibrium; and then three formidable hurrahs broke the silence of our adversaries. At the third they were on us, pressing our disorderly retreat.'[1]

An impartial survey of the military history of the Continent prior to the Revolution of 1789, is by no means favourable to the exalted pretensions of the French. Against Rocroy, Nordlingen, Steinkirk, Landau, Fontenoy, must be set Pavia, St. Quentin, Blenheim, Ramillies, Malplaquet, Oudenarde, Dettingen, Minden, Rosbach. 'The King of England,' said

[1] 'L'Armée Française en 1867.' Douzième édition, 1867, p. 241.

Louis XIV. to his Ambassador, d'Estrades, in 1667, 'may know the amount of my force, but he knows not the elevation of my mind. Everything appears to me contemptible in comparison with glory.' He was told and believed that he had attained the highest pinnacle of glory when he had crossed the Rhine unopposed upon a bridge, or been present at the capitulation of a town reduced by the combined genius of Vauban and Turenne. He waged war with an ostentatious magnificence, with a vastness and prodigality of resource, that long imposed not only on his own subjects but the world; yet when he signed the peace of Ryswick in 1697, his power was rapidly declining, his pride broken, and his military *prestige* altogether at an end. No vain-glorious despot had ever better reason to speculate on the vanity of human wishes before he died.

Napoleon, next to Louis XIV., must be held answerable for French assumption; yet here, again, the successes and victories were followed by accumulated disasters and defeats: giving France a bitter foretaste of the still more crushing blow that was in store for her. Three times over has she fought *à outrance* for military supremacy: under the Great Monarch, the still greater Emperor, and the Man of Sedan. Three times over has she been vanquished, and twice subjected to the severest penalties a conqueror crying *Væ victis* could inflict. Surely it is time to give over affecting the part which Anchises assigned to the Roman:

> 'Tu regere imperio populos, Romane, memento:
> Hæ tibi erunt artes: pacisque imponere morem,
> Parcere subjectis, et debellare superbos.'

Like Hercules between virtue and vice, or Mahomet's coffin between heaven and earth, M. Taine, dragged different ways by his taste and his principles, is constantly suspended between the agreeable and the good. This is particularly observable in what he says of our

women. Admitting their sterling qualities, he cannot get over their rude health, their robustness, their bad taste in dress, their frankness of manner, or their culpable neglect of those arts of pleasing which come so naturally to a Frenchwoman. 'As evidences of the state of the streets,' he says, 'look at the foot coverings (*chaussure*), and the feet of the ladies. Their boots are as large as those of gentlemen, their feet are those of watermen, and their gait is in keeping.'[1] But see them in Rotten Row :—

'Many of the horsewomen are charming, so simple, and so serious, without a trace of coquetry; they come here not to be seen, but to take the air; their manner is frank without pretension; their shake of the hand quite loyal, almost masculine; no frippery in their attire; the small black vest, tightened at the waist, moulds (*montre*) a fine shape and healthy form; to my mind, the first duty of a young lady is to be in good health.'

Then why quarrel with them for adapting the means to the end? With amusing inconsistency M. Taine cites approvingly the sneer of Stendhal (Henri Behl) at the English girls, who, 'tired of staying at home, under the plea of necessary exercise, complete their three or four leagues a day. *In this manner they consume the nervous fluid by the legs, and not by the heart.*' After which, forsooth, they presume to talk of feminine delicacy, and to despise France and Italy. Nothing, on the contrary, can be more free from occupation than the young Italians; the motion which would deprive them of their sensibility is disagreeable to them. An Italian beauty does not take in a year as much exercise as a young *Miss* in a week.'

If feminine delicacy were identical with languid sensibility, and intrigue or gallantry the chief business of

[1] We cannot compliment Mr. Rae on his translation of this passage, which runs thus:—'Comme documents, voyez la chaussure et les pieds des dames: bottines qui sont des bottes, forts pieds d'échassiers et démarche assortie,' p. 22.

life, the Italian beauty would bear away the palm; but her indolent, self-indulging habits not only unfit her for domestic life or intellectual companionship: they render her incapable of deep passion, or of an absorbing or lasting sentiment even of the illicit or forbidden kind:

'No—'tis not the region where love's to be found:
They have bosoms that sigh, they have glances that rove;
They have language a Sappho's own lip might resound,
When she warbled her best, but they've nothing like Love.'[1]

Speaking of an evening-party at Lady S—'s, M. Taine says:—

'Two other young girls are beautiful and pleasing; but too rosy, and upon this rosiness are too many adornments of staring green which vex the eye. But as compensation, how simple and affable are they! Twice out of three times when one converses here with a woman, one feels rested, affected, almost happy; their greeting is kindly, friendly; and such a smile of gentle and quiet goodness! No after-thought; the intention, the expression, everything is open, natural, cordial. One is much more at ease than with a Frenchwoman. . . . The conversation (with an Englishwoman) is neither a duel, nor a competition; one may express a thought as it is without embellishment; one has the right to be what one is, common-place. One may even, without wearying her or having a pedantic air, speak to her about serious matters, obtain from her correct information, reason with her as with a man.'

He is prodigal of types. Here is another to illustrate what he calls the chief point, the absence of coquetry:—

'This winter in a Paris drawing-room where I was, a stout, red-faced, bald man, related to a rather great English personage, entered leading his daughter of sixteen; pretty gentle face, but what ignorance of dress! She had dark brown gloves, hair in curls, not glossy, a sort of badly fitting white casaque, and her waist resembled a log in a sack. All the evening she remained silent, like a Cinderella amidst the

[1] Moore, 'Rhymes on the Road:' Florence.

splendours and supreme elegances of the dresses and beauties surrounding her. Here, in St. James's Park, at the Exhibition, in the picture-galleries, many young ladies, pretty, well dressed, wore spectacles. I put aside several other traits; but it is clear to me that they possess in a much lesser degree than Frenchwomen the sentiment which ordains that at every moment, and before every person, a woman should stand with shouldered arms, and feel herself on parade.'

The absurdity of requiring a woman to be studied and unstudied, natural and artificial, thinking of herself and not thinking of herself at the same time, never once occurs to him. But as our fair countrywomen think a great deal about their dress, and spend a great deal of money on it, their taste is a fair object of comment; and it is a French remark of long standing, that an Englishwoman resembles the lists at a tournament in which hostile colours encounter and join battle. 'I remarked to a lady (says M. Taine), that female dress was more showy in England than in France. "But our gowns come from Paris!" I took care not to reply: "It is you choose them!"' M. Taine should know that French dressmakers of note, considering their own reputation at stake, leave their English customers little choice in the matter.

In his chapter on 'Marriage and Married Women,' he institutes a fair enough comparison between the wedded life of England and that of France; nor is its fairness affected by the leaning he betrays towards a certain degree of laxity:

'When the young man has made up his mind, it is to the young girl that he addresses himself first, asking the consent of the parents in the second place: this is the opposite of the French custom, where the man would consider it indelicate to utter a single clear or vague phrase to the young girl before having spoken to her parents. In this matter the English find fault with us, ridicule our marriages summarily settled before a lawyer. Yet C——, who is English, and knows France well, allows that their love-matches end more

than once in discord, and our marriages of arrangement in concord.'

A love-match is, of course, more likely to end in disappointment than a marriage based on the fitness of things, on compatibility of rank, fortune, connexion, temper, age. It has been ingeniously contended that English marriages between persons of distinction would turn out better, if settled, after argument by counsel, by the Lord Chancellor. Lady Mary Wortley Montague exerted all her influence to get a Bill passed for assimilating marriages to leases for a term of seven, fourteen, or twenty-one years. But she was a good deal puzzled by the objection that a lease always contained a covenant to keep and leave in good repair, reasonable wear and tear excepted. Mrs. Malaprop's theory, that it is best to begin with a little aversion, is not devoid of plausibility. But, on the other hand, a marriage of reason or convenience partakes too much of the nature of a mere form, and the ceremony sounds like a mockery when the solemn promise to love, honour, and obey, is uttered like a lesson learned by rote, instead of being spoken earnestly and from the heart.

The conversation at the Château Tocqueville happening to turn on French marriages, it was stated that, on the female side, they are generally early; a girl unmarried at twenty-one or twenty-two gets alarmed, The *curés* are the principal marriage-makers. They alone know everybody. A man of eight or nine and twenty may wish for a wife, but is too busy or too awkward to set about getting one for himself. He applies to the *curé*, tells him, perhaps, that he has twenty or twenty-five thousand francs a year. 'Well,' answers the *curé*, 'I think that I have three or four charming demoiselles at that price.' So the introduction is managed, and the affair is concluded in a few weeks. 'The life of an unmarried girl,' added Madame de Tocqueville, 'is very *triste*. She never quits her

mother's side except perhaps to dance, and then does not exchange a word with her partner. She takes no part in conversation; she effaces herself, in short, as much as possible. Were she to do otherwise, she would ruin her chances of marriage.'

To the French girl, therefore, marriage is escape from restraint; it is practically her *début* in society, her introduction to the world, in which she is now free to talk and act, to choose her own dresses and companions, to indulge her caprices, to enter into rivalry with the women, and lend a delighted ear to the flatteries of the men. It would be passing strange, if thus occupied and surrounded for the first time, her thoughts should be fixed exclusively on her husband and her home. The English girl of corresponding rank seldom marries till after her third or fourth season; she has run the round of gaiety and haply begun to tire of it; she has undergone the ordeal of male attention; she has had her passing illusion or more serious interest: *l'amour a passé par là*; and her change of condition not unfrequently implies a considerable amount of self-denial or self-sacrifice, instead of being the 'open sesame' to untried realms of fashion and frivolity.

'Very often a lady, daughter of a marquis or baronet, having a dowry of 3000*l.* or 3250*l.*, marries a simple gentleman, and descends of her own free will from a state of fortune, of comfort, of society, into a lower or much inferior grade. She accustoms herself to this. The reverse of the medal is the fishery for husbands. Worldly and vulgar characters do not fail in this respect; certain young girls use and abuse their freedom in order to settle themselves well. A young man, rich and noble, is much run after. Being too well received, flattered, tempted, provoked, he becomes suspicious and remains on his guard. This is not the case in France; the young girls are too closely watched to make the first advance; there the game never becomes the sportsman.'

'Why did you cut me at the morning-party at

Strawberry Hill?' asked a younger son of a young lady on her preferment. 'The *sun* was in my eyes, and I did not see you.' 'Yes, the eldest *son*.' This peculiar description of sunstroke will occasionally affect the vision of the fair, and their liability to it is one of the inevitable inconveniences of our system. But, by way of set-off, M. Taine tells us that, in order to marry, it is generally deemed necessary that they should feel a passion; and that 'many do not marry in consequence of a thwarted inclination.' As to the men,—

'Every Englishman has a bit of romance in his heart with regard to marriage; he pictures a home with the wife of his choice, domestic talk, children: there his little universe is enclosed, all his own; so long as he does not have it he is dissatisfied, being in this matter the reverse of a Frenchman, to whom marriage is generally an end, a makeshift.'

M. Taine was assured that, when an Englishman is in love, he is capable of anything: that Thackeray's Major Dobbin, who waits fifteen years without hope, because for him there is only one woman in the world, was drawn from the life: that there were and are numbers of young men like him:—

'This causes silent rendings of the heart and long inner tragedies. Numbers of young men experience it; and the protracted chastity, the habits of taciturn concentration, a capacity for emotion greater and less scattered than among us, carries their passions to the extreme. Frequently it ends in nothing, because they are not beloved, or because the disparity of rank is too great, or because they have not money enough wherewith to maintain a family—a very costly thing here. Then they become half insane; travel to distract their minds, proceed to the ends of the earth. One who was mentioned to me, very distinguished, was supplanted by a titled rival; during two years, apprehensions were felt for his reason. He went to China and to Australia; at present he occupies a high post, he has been made a baronet, he presides over important business, but he is unmarried; from time to time he steals off, makes a journey on foot, in order to be alone and not to have any one to converse with.'

So marked a difference in the matrimonial tie at starting must tell materially on the after-life of the parties, and the tie will naturally be deemed most binding in the country where it has been eagerly sought as a blessing instead of being coldly accepted as a makeshift. In England, consequently, 'marriage is encompassed with profound respect, and, as regards this matter, opinion is unbending: it is quite sufficient to read books, newspapers, romances, comic journals; adultery is never excused; even in the latitude of intimate conversations between man and man it is always held up as a crime.' In France, the exactly contrary is the fact: marriage is the never-failing subject of jocularity; in the novel, the play, the opera, the vaudeville, the plot almost invariably turns on matrimonial infidelity, the deceived husband being held up to ridicule, the false wife to envy and imitation; indeed, one does not see how French dramatists or novelists could get on at all if there were no Seventh Commandment to be broken or made light of. It has been the same from Molière downwards; and Frenchmen still quote complacently the grave irony of Montesquieu: 'Que le Français ne parle jamais de sa femme, parce qu'il a peur d'en parler devant les gens qui la connoissent mieux que lui.'

They do themselves great injustice: the national vanity is discernible in the very exaggeration of their faults: the immorality described by their dramatists could not co-exist with the bare decencies of life: and we lend a ready ear to the palliation of M. Taine:

'In the first place, these irregularities are not habitual among us, excepting in the case of fashionable upstarts; they very rarely reach the rich or well-to-do middle-class which possesses family traditions. Besides, in the provinces, life goes on openly, and scandal-mongering, which is greatly feared, performs the part of the police. Finally, the Frenchman flaunts that which a foreigner conceals: he has a horror of hypocrisy, and he prefers to be a braggart of vice.'

Hypocrisy has been defined the homage paid to virtue by vice; and virtue will be found in a wavering unsatisfactory state wherever and whenever that homage is denied. When M. Taine relies on scandal-mongering as the safeguard of female honour, he unconsciously adopts the slippery doctrine of Byron:—

> 'And whether coldness, pride, or virtue dignify
> A woman, so she's good, what does it signify?'

Besides, so long as what they call the *convenances* are observed, there is no scandal; and the standard of conduct both in town and country will always be more or less modified by the drama and light literature, the tone and spirit of the day. M. Taine's estimate of the analogous state of things in this country must also be taken with some grains of allowance:

'Breaches occur, of which I shall speak later, among the class of tradesmen; and in the lower order of the nobility which is fashionable, travels, and copies Continental manners. But, in the mass of the nation, among well brought up persons in the great world, the wives are almost always faithful. C—— tells me that I might remain here for eighteen months, and visit all the drawing-rooms, without meeting an exception: *one only is cited among the highest class.* Much more cases occurred fifty years ago, in the time of Byron and Alfieri; since then, opinion has become severe, and the Queen has laboured with all her might in this direction, firstly, by her example; secondly, by her influence: she excludes ladies of doubtful reputation from her Court; the extreme urgency and pressure of affairs were needed during the Crimean war for her to tolerate under the same roof with her, at Windsor, a statesman known as a profligate.'

The frequent appearance of persons of inferior rank in the Divorce Court has given foreigners an erroneous notion of the commercial classes in England, by whom, as also by the whole of the middle class, the matrimonial tie is held in high respect. When they break loose, it is by coarse profligacy. They are wholly guiltless of gallantry; and a plot turning on the in-

trigues of shopkeepers with each others' wives, which sounds so natural and probable when the scene is laid in the *Rue de la Paix*, would be declared incongruous and preposterous if the 'dramatis personæ' were domiciled in Cheapside.

'On the other hand, as we have seen, the married women are almost all faithful. B. pretends that there are exceptions in the very high class, adventures like those of Lady Adelina[1] in the "Don Juan" of Lord Byron, in the country, with infinite precautions and secrecy. But it is with the well-to-do (*aisés*) shop-keepers that accidents are most frequent, because the woman is unoccupied. Not having, as in France, the resources of visits and the theatre; nor, like the wives of gentlemen, that of patronising and giving lessons to the poor—placed above want—never lending a hand in the kitchen or in dressmaking—it is by this great void of *ennui* that the door is opened to seduction. The lover is most frequently a man of the world, a rich gentleman, who deals with them. At the same time, except for some profligates, the situation is disagreeable. *Un Anglais à l'état d'adultère est malheureux; sa conscience lui tourmente au plus beau moment.*'[2]

English delicacy, again, although unfortunately it does not prevent young women from agitating against the Contagious Diseases Act, is opposed to the introduction of the 'social evil' on the English stage in any shape. In France it is perseveringly made prominent in the form of a *Dame aux Camélias*, the *Filles de Marbre*, a *lorette* or (the latest variety of the species) a *cocotte*. In *Les Curieuses*, a Russian princess, on her arrival in Paris for the season, finds herself, through the oversight of her agent, the occupant of a furnished apartment belonging to a mercenary charmer, whose admirers and associates are not aware that it has been let; and the great lady amuses herself by admitting

[1] Lady Adeline Amurdeville has no adventures, although no doubt there were some in store for her. The only adventure in the country (at Norman Abbey) is that of the Duchess of Fitzfulke.

[2] This paragraph is omitted by the translator.

the male and female *habitués* in the assumed character of friend and professional colleague of her landlady. She thus acquires an intimate personal acquaintance with their habits and modes of life; rendered doubly interesting by an unexpected encounter with the Prince, her husband, the object of whose call was professedly the reverse of conjugal.

The Queen's married life was a moral lesson and an elevating, improving picture in itself. During the best part of a generation it worked wonders, and its influence extended far beyond the circle which is more or less compelled to follow the lead of the Court. But, of late years, there have been symptoms of a relapse. Temptations and irregular tendencies must always abound amidst the idleness and satiety of a rich, luxurious metropolis; the example of Imperial Paris did harm; the vanity of dress was never more baneful than now; and if M. Taine were to spend eighteen months in searching London drawing-rooms for an erring spouse he would be more successful than Diogenes when searching Athens for an honest man. The 'fast' girl has been discovered or sprung up: and Byron's 'drapery misses'[1] have been outdone by drapery dames.

There is a scene in 'Les Esclaves de Paris,' in which the famous dressmaker W—— is holding court. A married woman, deep in his books, exclaims in agony on his refusing to give time,—'Mais si vous saviez . . . Je n'oserai jamais rentrer chez moi . . . je n'aurai pas le courage d'avouer.' With a sneer of revolting cynicism, he replies: 'Eh bien! si votre mari vous fait peur, adressez-vous à un autre.'

[1] 'This term is probably anything now but a mystery. It was, however, almost so to me when I returned from the East in 1811–1812. It means a pretty, a high-born, a fashionable young female, well instructed by her friends, and furnished by her milliner with a wardrobe upon credit, to be repaid, when married, by the *husband*.'—('Don Juan,' canto ii. st. 49, note.)

A young and unsophisticated observer of the scene ventures a remonstrance, and this dialogue ensues:

'What! you do not know that all these silly customers of mine are, as it were, mad with vanity and the passion of dress! Father, mother, husband, they would give all, along with their children into the bargain, to open an account with me. You cannot form a notion of what a woman will do to procure the gown which will make her rival burst with vexation. . . . It is only when it comes to settling that they think of the family.'

'However, you know that with her you will lose nothing: her husband—'

'Ah, yes! the husbands; let us come to them. They make me die with laughter. Go with your dresses! They receive you with all possible politeness, for they too like the handsome stuffs which do them honour. When you present your bill, it is quite a different matter. They make terrible faces, and talk of turning you out of doors.'

'The husbands are often deceived.'

'Don't talk to me. . . . They know very well, and in any case it is their duty to be informed. When they have given a hundred louis a month, they think themselves quiet, and see dresses capable of startling the cab horses defile before them by the dozen. If it never occurs to them that their wives buy these on credit, where do they think they are got? But no, the husband and wife understand one another.'

'You have been perhaps a little hard.'

'Bah! I shall be paid to-morrow. I know well by whom and how, and I shall have another order. I had my reasons for acting as I did.'

The contemptuous manner in which this despot of fashion speaks of 100 louis a month may give a notion of the extravagance of modern expenditure in dress. The year before the war a Frenchwoman, sued by a dressmaker for the balance of an account current for three years, paid 300,000 francs (12,000*l.*) into court as confessedly due: the sum claimed being about half as much again. This was exclusive of bills due to other dressmakers and miscellaneous expenses of *toilette*.

The scene of an incident best suited to the meridian

of Paris or London, is laid at the Viceregal court of Dublin. The husband of a pretty woman, who had flirted with a succession of officials, from the Lord-Lieutenant downwards, for a series of years, at length was rewarded for his wife's exertions by a place. The morning after his appointment was gazetted, the fashionable milliner of Dublin sent in her bill, making him debtor to the tune of about two years of the salary to come. 'What,' he exclaimed, with a startled look at the sum total, 'two years' salary for my wife's dresses!' 'Well, sir, don't be angry: without your wife's dresses, you would have no place or salary at all.'

On being told, in 1803, at Paris, that a lady whom he had formerly known was no longer received in society, Mackintosh remarks, 'I really should like to know what her offence could be.' We really should like to know what the solitary exception cited to M. Taine could have done to merit her painful pre-eminence. To us she is a mythical personage: so is the profligate statesman whom the Queen tolerated at Windsor during the Crimean war: so is the heart-broken baronet who, after vainly trying China and Australia, takes refuge in solitary pedestrianism. The distinction drawn between the lower order of nobility and the higher is fanciful.

'Another guarantee [continues M. Taine] is the dread of publicity and of the newspapers. On this head our free and rakish manners grievously offend them. C—— related to me that, in a Parisian circle, he heard a man of the world observe to another, "Is it true, then, that your wife has got a lover?" This remark he considers monstrous; and he is right. A book like Balzac's "Physiologie du Mariage" would give great offence; perhaps the author would be prosecuted by the Society for the Suppression of Vice.'

Society must be in a curious state where any doubt could be raised as to the taste or propriety of the re-

mark declared monstrous by C., or where Balzac's 'Physiologie du Mariage' could be deemed permissible reading for women. Its cold, hard, cynical materialism is yet more revolting than its indecency. One of the maxims is, 'Avant de se marier, on doit avoir *au moins* disséqué *une* femme.' But French novels of an extremely objectionable tone and tendency have found their way into English boudoirs; and it is the highest English aristocracy that supplies the crowded and applauding public for *Madame attend Monsieur* and *La Grande Duchesse.* The broad general conclusion at which M. Taine arrives, after tossing the subject to and fro, blowing hot and cold on it, and placing it in every variety of light, is thus expressed:—

'Generally an Englishwoman is more thoroughly beautiful and healthy than a Frenchwoman. The principal cause of this is the hygiene; the children ride on horseback, are much in the open air, do not dine with their parents, do not eat sweetmeats. Moreover, the nerves are less excited, and the temperament is calmer, more enduring, less exacting; what is the most wearing in these days, are incessant and unsatisfied desires.

. . . . . .

'On the other hand, the Englishwoman is less agreeable: she does not dress for her husband, she does not know how to make a pretty woman of herself; she has no talent for rendering herself fascinating and enticing at home; she is unacquainted with a number of fine and delicate graces; she considers it unworthy of her to employ minor means for re-awakening love or fondness; more frequently still she is not clever enough to invent them. She puts on handsome new dresses, is most careful about cleanliness, but nothing more; she is not attractive; one soon wearies beside her. Fancy a very beautiful pink peach, slightly juicy, and alongside of it a perfumed strawberry full of flavour.'

But let us look a little closer at the perfumed strawberry: let us see if there is not a small maggot at the core:

'. . . . medio de fonte leporum
Surgit amari aliquid quod in ipsis floribus angat.'

'There is a small piece now [1834] acting at one of the minor theatres called "Pourquoi." It is very popular; everybody goes to see it, and says, "it is so true." What tale lies hid under this mysterious title? "There are two married friends living together. The wife of one is charming, always ready to obey and to oblige; her husband's will is her law. Nothing puts her out of humour. This couple live on the best of terms, and the husband is as happy as husband can desire to be.—Now for the other pair! Here is continual wrangling and dispute. The wife will have her own way in the merest trifles as on the gravest matters. . . . In short, nothing can be so disagreeable as this good lady is to her grumbling but submissive helpmate. Happiness and misery were never to all appearance brought more fairly face to face than in these two domestic establishments. 'Why' is one wife such a pattern of good nature and submission? 'Why' is the other such a detestable shrew? This is the *pourquoi*. The spouse whom you shrink from in such justifiable horror is as faithful as woman can be. The spouse whom you cling to as such a pillow of comfort, is an intriguing hussy. Hear, O ye French husbands! you must not expect your wives to have at the same time chastity and good temper: the qualities are incompatible. Your eyes must be picked out or horns on your head must grow. This is the farce which is 'so popular.' This is the picture of manners which people call 'so true.'"'[1]

It is as true now as it was in 1834. In *Célimare le Bien-Aimé*, the hero, after devoting his youth to the wives of his neighbours, is induced by advancing years to take a wife of his own. The persons most discontented at this step are the husbands of the ladies whom

[1] Bulwer's 'France,' vol. i. p. 94.

he has been accustomed to honour with his attentions, and they complain bitterly that he no longer takes the smallest interest in them. The most successful scene is one in which they rival each other in the display of their fatuity. One of them, Bocardon, after dwelling on Célimare's kindness in training a dog for him, goes on :—

'One evening I came home with my dog, which I had taken out walking; I take him out every evening. I came to my wife's room; all of a sudden Minotaur rushes to the door of the closet; he begins scratching and barking. I thought it was a rat, or a thief; I opened the closet; it was Célimare.

'*Vernouillet* (*the other husband, aside*): What a thing for him to tell!

'*Bocardon*: It was my wife who had hidden him, to see if Minotaur would find him, and he did find him.

'*Emma* (*the bride*): All this is very agreeable.

'*Bocardon*: Wasn't it funny?

'*Vernouillet* (*in a low tone to Bocardon, and putting him aside*): Hold your tongue, can't you?

'*Bocardon* (*surprised*): What for?

'*Vernouillet* (*to Emma*): My wife had a parrot still more extraordinary than this dog. Célimare delighted in teaching it. Its cage was in the antechamber, and whenever it saw me coming in, it cried out: *Voilà monsieur! voilà monsieur!*

'*Bocardon* (*aside*): He tells that to the wife! What a fool!'

This is a mild specimen of the popular view taken of the relations between married people of the middle class in France. There is another stock piece of the French stage, from which an equal amount of instruction, with a sounder rule of conduct for both sexes, may be deduced. It is entitled, 'La Seconde Année, ou à Qui la Faute?' The marriage here is a marriage of affection: the young couple had seen each other, and become mutually attached, whilst the family arrangements were in progress. The first year passes

like a prolonged honeymoon, but before the middle of the second, the husband indulges a hankering for his old haunts, steals off to his club, and renews his acquaintance with the actresses and opera-dancers *à la mode*. A friend, Edmund, seizes the occasion to amuse Madame la Comtesse, and things are looking bad, when the husband receives a timely warning, and soliloquises somewhat in this fashion: 'It's all my own fault, and, luckily, it's not too late to mend. She liked me better than Edmund when we were both suitors, and, *au fond*, she likes me better still. Vulgar jealousy would be unworthy of us both. Strong measures are out of the question. *Allons*, I must be *aux petits soins* again.' He sets regularly to work to win her back; no longer lounges into her drawing-room to leave it, after reading his newspaper, with a yawn; lingers round her with marked interest, pays her graceful compliments, and lays the most beautiful bouquets on her dressing-table. This system is crowned with well-merited success: the husband is reinstated in all the privileges of the lover, and M. Edmund, fairly beaten with his own weapons, is bowed out.

This piece, unexceptionable as it reads and acts in point of moral, could not be effectively adapted to the English stage, because it is out of keeping with our manners and modes of thinking to trifle with the duties and relations of married life, or to take for granted that infidelity is justified by neglect. Neither would such conjugal tactics have the attraction of novelty or originality for an English audience. 'Madame —— (at Paris) said, "The English are excellent people: when no one else makes love to their wives, they do it themselves." "Yes," added ——, "I observed Mr. —— (an Englishman,) the other evening talking to his wife for half an hour together."'[1]

Strengthened by the authority of his omnipresent

[1] 'Life of Mackintosh.' By his Son.

and omniscient friend C., M. Taine pronounces an Englishwoman to be incapable of presiding in a drawing-room like a Frenchwoman, to be consequently incapable of forming a *salon* :—

'The Englishwoman has not sufficient tact, promptitude, suppleness to accommodate herself to persons and things, to vary a greeting, comprehend a hint, insinuate praise, make each guest feel that she thinks his presence of much consequence. She is affable only, she merely possesses kindness and serenity. For, myself, I desire nothing more, and I can imagine nothing better. But it is clear that a woman of the world—that is to say, a person who wishes to make her house a place of meeting frequented and valued by the most distinguished persons of every species—requires to have a more varied and a more delicate talent.'

The talent in question has been possessed and displayed by many Englishwomen. Lady Palmerston, for example, had it in as high a degree of perfection as Madame de Recamier, of whom Tocqueville says, 'The talent, labour, and skill which she wasted in her *salon* would have gained and governed an empire.'[1] The *salon* jars with our habits: we cling too much to the privacy of the domestic circle, and we have no sympathy with the Frenchman exclaiming, '*Où passerai-je mes soirées?*' which it had become a second nature to him to pass out of his own house.[2] But it is customary for women of the higher class to receive visits from three to six on Sundays: these afternoon receptions

[1] Vol. ii. p. 209. The rest of the passage is curious: 'She was virtuous, if it be virtuous to persuade every one of a dozen men that you wish to favour him, though some circumstance always occurs to prevent your doing so. Every friend thought himself preferred. She governed us by little distinctions, by letting one man come five minutes before the others, or stay five minutes after; just as Louis XIV. raised one courtier to the seventh heaven by giving him the bougie, and another by leaning on his arm, or taking the shirt from him.'

[2] When, on M. Recamier's death, Chateaubriand proposed marriage to Madame, she objected the disturbance of his habits, as he was accustomed to pass all his evenings in her *salon*.

closely resemble the *salon*; and in the height of the London season M. Taine's friend C. might have taken him to more than one in which he would have found an Englishwoman doing the honours with Parisian grace to a succession of distinguished visitors, putting all of them at their ease, leading the conversation to the appropriate topics, and rendering to all what was socially or intellectually their due. Such an introduction would have had the additional advantage of showing M. Taine how the dull monotony of an English Sunday may be relieved.

The narrowness of the family circle in England is no less remarkable than its exclusiveness. It is commonly confined to a single branch. Rarely do we see in England, what is common in Germany and France, several branches living together under the same roof: at one time two or three married brothers, at another the parents with their sons-in-law and their daughters, and so on. 'We (says M. Taine) coalesce, we hold everything in common; as for them (the English), even when living together, they maintain distinctions, they draw lines of demarcation. Self is more powerful; each of them preserves a portion of his individuality, his own special and personal nook, enclosed, respected, by every one. Thus a father or mother is more imperfectly informed than among us as to the sentiments of their daughter, as to the business and the pleasures of their son. In France,' he adds, 'a son tells his mother everything, even about his mistresses: the usage is ancient. Madame de Sevigné related to her daughter secrets which she received from her son, secrets which she was only able to express owing to her *verve*, her gaiety, her wonderful lightness of touch.'[1] Even at the present day

[1] *e.g.* 'Votre frère me contait l'autre jour, qu'un comédien vouloit se marier, quoiqu'il eût un certain mal un peu dangereux, et son camarade lui dit,—"Hé! morbleu, attends que tu sois guéri: tu nous perdras tous." Cela me parut fort épigramme.'

very many young Frenchmen make similar avowals to their mothers, who, instead of being scandalized, are pleased at being made confidants. 'B—— is of opinion that this is impossible in England: the son would not dare to do it; the mother would be shocked and indignant.'

Prince Pückler Muskau, who travelled through England in 1826, after complaining of the stiffness of the English aristocracy, remarks:—

'Far more loveable, because far more loving, do the English appear in their domestic and most intimate relations; though even here some "baroque" customs prevail: for instance, the sons in the highest ranks, as soon as they are fledged, leave the paternal roof and live alone; nay, actually do not present themselves at their father's dinner-table without a formal invitation. I lately read a curious instance of conjugal affection in the newspaper. The Marquis of Hastings died in Malta: shortly before his death, he ordered that his right hand should be cut off immediately after his death, and sent to his wife.

A gentleman of my acquaintance, *out of real tenderness* [was not the Marquis actuated by real tenderness?], and with her previously-obtained permission, cut off his mother's head, that he might keep the skull as long as he lived; while other Englishmen, I really believe, would rather endure eternal torments than permit the scalpel to come near their bodies. The law enjoins the most scrupulous fulfilment of such dispositions of a deceased; however extravagant they may be, they must be executed. I am told there is a country house in England where a corpse, fully dressed, has been standing at a window for the last half-century, and still overlooks its former property.'

These caprices are not confined to a country or a class. The corpse of the cosmopolitan Jeremy Bentham may still be seen seated in the philosopher's chair in his ordinary costume.

The Prince complained that 'politics are here a main ingredient of social intercourse; as they begin to be in Paris, and will in time become in our sleepy

Germany: for the whole world has now that tendency. The lighter and more frivolous pleasures suffer by this change, and the art of conversation, as it once flourished in France, will, perhaps, soon be entirely lost. In this country (England) I should rather think it never existed, unless, perhaps, in Charles the Second's time.' M. Taine leans to this opinion. 'So far as I can judge, the English do not know how to amuse themselves by means of conversation. A Frenchman accounts the happiest moment of his life the period after supper, in the society of well-educated and intelligent men. All the treasures of the human intellect are there handled, not in heavy ingots, or in large sacks, but in pretty portable golden coins. It seems to me that these coins are rare in England, and that, in addition, they are not current. They are regarded as too thin.'

The exact opposite would be nearer to the fact. The fault of English conversation at present is its frivolity, its want of depth and earnestness, the habit of skipping hastily from topic to topic, the fear which seems to haunt everybody of being voted bores, if they venture beyond a fresh bit of gossip, a short anecdote, or a *bon mot*. Lord Grenville used to say that he was always glad to meet lawyers at a dinner-party, because he then felt sure that some good subject would be rationally discussed. Lawyers have degenerated since his time, but not more than other classes or professions in this respect; for (except in a few small and select circles), whether lawyers, authors, doctors, bishops, peers, or members of Parliament make up the party, there is a decided want of what Dr. Johnson emphatically termed 'good talk.'

'I cannot understand,' said Tocqueville, 'how your great people, after having passed six months of representation in London, like to erect a little London for themselves in the country. *We* never think of filling our country houses with crowds of acquaintances. Our

parties are mere family parties, and all our arrangements are meant for ease and comfort. There is no luxury or display in our furniture, no ostentation in our dinners.' Senior replies, that 'in London, where one has to go three or four miles to see one's friends, where few busy men can spare more than one or two evenings in a week, one scarcely sees the persons that one likes best a dozen times in a season, and then perhaps it is at a large dinner, or a crowded one. One can really enjoy their society in the country.' The same difference is remarked by M. Taine, who, in addition to the explanation given by Senior, says that the Englishman is hospitable, not only from generosity and kindliness, but from *ennui*, from the need of conversation and new ideas. This excites the indignation of his translator, who protests that 'neither the word nor the thing is known in this country.' Yet we read in Byron:—

> 'For *ennui* is a growth of English root,
> Though nameless in our language: we retort
> The fact for words, and let the French translate
> That awful yawn which sleep can not abate.'

Ennui is a growth of every clime; and Mr. Rae might as well contend that no one is ever *bored* out of England, because the word is English and untranslatable. At the same time we see no necessity for any nice analysis of motives to explain why a nobleman or gentleman, with a spacious country house, including fine pictures and a library, surrounded by well-stocked preserves, should receive a succession of visitors during a portion of the year, and be especially anxious to entertain foreigners of note.

Speaking of the England of her youth, Miss Berry says, 'No man intending to stand for his county, or desirous of being popular in it, would have permitted his table at his country house to be served with three-pronged forks, or his ale to be presented but in a

tankard to which every mouth was successively to be applied. Sofas conveyed ideas of impropriety; and baths, and every extra attention to cleanliness and purity of person, were habits by no means supposed to refer to superior purity of mind or manners.'[1] Contrast this with M. Taine's account of the superabundant luxury of country-house life now: 'In my bedroom is a table of rosewood; upon this table a slab of marble, on the marble a round straw mat: all this to bear an ornamented water-bottle, covered with a tumbler. There are two dressing-tables, each having six drawers: the first is provided with a swing looking-glass, the second with one large jug, one small one, a medium one for hot water, two porcelain basins, two soap-dishes, &c. Napkins are under all the vessels and utensils: to provide for such a service, when the house is occupied, *it is necessary that washing should be always going on.*' That inconvenience may certainly arise, as the Englishman said to the Frenchman who, on being recommended to put his feet in hot water for a cold, objected that this was tantamount to washing them.

'Several of these mansions are historical; they must be seen in order to understand what inheritance in a large family can bring together in the form of treasures. One was mentioned to me where, by a clause in the conditions, the possessor is bound to invest every year several thousand sterling in silver plate; after having crowded the sideboards, in the end, a staircase was made of massive silver. We had the opportunity of seeing in the retrospective exhibition an entire collection of precious curiosities and works of art sent by Lord Hertford. In 1848, he said to one of his French friends, greatly disquieted and a little put out, "I have a mansion in Wales which I have never seen, but which I am told is very fine. Every day dinner for twelve is served there, and the carriage drawn up at the door in case I should arrive. The butler eats the dinner. Go thither, make

[1] 'England and France.'—Second edition, vol. ii. p. 41.

yourself at home; you see that it will not cost you a farthing."'

Both these stories have been told of Spanish grandees. Neither is true of any English nobleman. The late Lord Hertford was by no means given to princely hospitality; but the Duc d'Ossuna, whilst resident Ambassador at St. Petersburg, kept up an establishment at Madrid, at which a dinner of twenty-four covers was regularly served, and horses and carriages were always at the disposal of his friends.

In M. Taine's animated description of the magnificent domain of Blenheim, he mentions 'a large stream of water, crossed by an ornamental bridge.' This bridge was constructed by the first Duke, and the smallness of the stream suggested the epigram,—

> 'The lofty arch his high ambition shows,
> The stream an emblem of his bounty flows.'

M. Taine's mistakes are almost all upon the surface. He seldom fails to penetrate to the truth when he is investigating the sources of our permanent well-being and prosperity. He has the imaginative as well as the intellectual grasp, and can take in all the bearings of a time-honoured institution, with its elevating and refining influences, as well as its assigned object or direct practical utility:—

'I have no park, and yet my eyes are satisfied with beholding one—only it must be accessible and well kept. It is the same with the lives of the great; they perform the functions of parks among the garden plots and tilled fields. The one furnishes venerable trees, velvet greenswards, the delicious fairy-land of accumulated flowers and poetic avenues; the other maintains certain elegancies of manners and certain shades of sentiments, renders possible a cosmopolite education, supplies a hotbed for statesmen.'

One of the first manufacturers in England, a Radical

and supporter of Mr. Bright, said to M. Taine, 'We do not wish to overthrow the aristocracy; we consent to their keeping the government and the high offices to members of the middle class; we believe that specially-trained men are required for the conduct of affairs; trained from father to son for this end, occupying an independent and commanding station. Besides, their title and their genealogy are a gilt feather. A troop is more easily led when its officer wears a plumed hat. But we absolutely require that they should fill all their places with competent persons. Nothing for mediocrities: no nepotism. Let them govern, provided, however, they have talent.'

M. Taine thinks that these conditions have been tolerably well performed on both sides since 1832. One of his friends knew Vincent, the itinerant orator, and was told by him, 'I can utter all that comes into my head, attack it matters not whom or what, except the Queen and Christianity. If I spoke against them my hearers would throw stones at me.' From a similar appreciation of the popular instincts, Cobbett set up his first shop under the sign of 'The Bible and the Crown.' Although M. Taine's speculations on the Established Church partake somewhat of the spirit of Pope's Universal Prayer, they are marked by feeling and sense:—

'The more I read the "Book of Common Prayer," the more beautiful and appropriate to its purpose do I find it. Whatever be the religion of a country, church is the place to which men come, after six days of mechanical toil, to freshen in themselves the sentiment of the ideal. Such was the Grecian temple under Cymon; such the Gothic cathedral under St. Louis. In accordance with the differences of sentiment, the ceremony and the edifice differ; but the important point is, that the sentiment should be revived and fortified. Now, in my opinion, that occurs here; a day labourer, a mason, a seamstress who leave this service carry with them noble impressions, suited to the instincts of their

race, a vague notion of an august, I know not what, of a superior order, of invisible justice.'

Then what becomes of Stendhal's notion, that, in England, religion spoils one day in seven, destroys the seventh part of possible happiness? Surely the sentiment of the ideal, thus freshened and revived, adds to it. 'On the fundamental point, which is the moral emotion, all are agreed, and, in consequence, all reunite to surround with assiduous respect, visible and unanimous, the Church and the pastor.' M. Taine thinks that this respect is materially enhanced by the social position of the working clergy; by their being gentlemen, which (in the conventional sense) can rarely be said of the working clergy in France. 'When you come to our château (said Tocqueville) you will find the curé dining frequently with me, and once a year Madame de Tocqueville and I dine with him. A brother of the predecessor of the present curé was my servant. The curé has dined with me while his brother waited, and neither of them perceived in this the least *inconvenance*.'

The complex and irregular construction of our society is a puzzle to M. Taine, as it has been immemorially a puzzle to all foreigners, and (to own the truth) is still a puzzle to ourselves. 'How is it (writes Tocqueville, in 1853) that the word *gentleman*, which in our language denotes a mere superiority of blood, with you is now used to express a certain social position and amount of education, independent of birth; so that in two countries the same word, though the sound remains the same, has entirely changed its meaning? When did this revolution take place? How, and through what transitions? If I had the honour of a personal acquaintance with Mr. Macaulay, I should venture to write to ask him these questions. In the excellent history which he is now publishing he alludes to this fact, but he does not try to explain it.'

These questions were put to Macaulay, and he was unable to answer them. M. Taine has devoted some pages to the attempt with indifferent success, although he has not failed to perceive that the word has no fixed and well-defined meaning, being indiscriminately used to express position, education, tone of mind, conduct, bearing, manners, and birth, in conjunction or apart. Thus B. was merely referring to conduct or character when, speaking to M. Taine of 'a great lord, a diplomatist,' he said, 'He is no gentleman.' But Dr. Arnold was using it to imply the rarest assemblage of qualities when, writing from France, he spoke of the total absence of gentlemen, and added, with less than his usual liberality, 'A real English Christian gentleman, of manly heart, enlightened mind, is more, I think, than Guizot or Sismondi could be able to comprehend; no other country could, I think, furnish so fine a specimen of human nature.' It is a well-known Irish boast that a finished Irish gentleman would be the most perfect gentleman in the world, *if you could but meet with him.*

A novelist (continues M. Taine) has depicted him (Dr. Arnold's ideal) under the name of 'John Halifax, Gentleman.' The subject is a poor abandoned child, who ends by becoming the leader of his district. A single phrase will show the tone of the book. When, after great misadventures, John attains independence, buys a house, and keeps his carriage, his son exclaims, 'Father, we are gentlefolks now!' 'We always were, my son.'

Reverting to the same topic, a little further on, M. Taine remarks:—

'The vital question in the case of a man is always put thus: Is he a gentleman? Similarly, in the case of a woman: Is she a lady? In these two cases one means to say that the person in question is of the superior class: this class is recognised in fact: a workman, a peasant, a shop-

keeper does not try to step over the line of demarcation. But how is it recognised that a person belongs to the superior class? In France we have not the word because we have not the thing, and these three syllables, as used across the Channel, summarise the history of English society.'

Montalembert draws an equally sweeping conclusion from the prevalence in French of two words which are wanting in English. He is speaking of the comparative disregard of blood or birth by the highest English aristocracy in their intermarriages with the middle or mercantile classes.

'Such intermarriages often took place on the Continent, particularly in France under the ancient *régime*, but never without exciting murmurs and mockery. In the English language there is no equivalent word for *mésalliance*, any more than for *parvenu*, and the ideas they express are alien to the manners of the country.'

It does not say much for the morals of the higher classes that the lower are in the habit of associating a dashing air of profligacy with gentility. Thus Margaret, after her first meeting with Faust: 'I would give something to know who that gentleman was to-day! He had a gallant bearing, and is of a noble family, I am sure: I could read that on his brow. Besides, he would not else have been so impudent.' The gamekeeper of a lady of rank, in Hampshire, came to tell her that a 'gentleman' was shooting over her best preserves, and refused to listen to remonstrances. 'A gentleman! how do you know him to be a gentleman?' 'Because he has got fourteen horses and another man's wife at the inn.'

'Most modern legislators resemble the children who, after having stuck a frail branch into the ground, pull it up every morning to see if it has taken root.' This is one of the published 'thoughts' of a statesman who has had the good fortune to see a constitution, which

he largely aided in planting, take root.[1] The same thought occurred to M. Taine, when an eminent French publicist talked of transplanting the English or American form of government to France, adding, 'It is the locomotive; it is enough to bring it across the water, and instantly it will replace the diligence.' No, we reply with M. Taine, a constitution, a system of government, has no analogy to a locomotive: it is not a mere mechanical contrivance: to copy it is one thing, to acclimatise or assimilate it is another. You may as well talk of transplanting an historic mansion with its hereditary associations and its oaks—

'We admire the stability of the English Government; this is due to its being the extremity and natural unfolding of an infinity of living fibres rooted in the soil over all the surface of the country. Suppose a riot like that of Lord Gordon's, but better conducted and fortified by socialistic proclamations; add to this, what is contrary to all probability, a gunpowder plot, the total and sudden destruction of the two Houses and of the Royal Family. Only the peak of the Government would be carried off, the rest would remain intact.'

Charles Lamb was wont to say that there were two historical events which he wished had turned out differently. He regretted that Charles I. did not hang Milton, and that Guy Fawkes did not succeed in blowing up the two Houses of Parliament. As regards the two Houses, he had possibly in view the solution of the problem started by M. Taine,—what the nation would do in such a contingency. We agree with M. Taine, that 'in each parish, in each county, there would be families around which the others would group themselves; important personages, gentlemen and noblemen, who would take the control and make a beginning;' that the exploded peers and

[1] 'Pensées Diverses de M. Sylvain Van de Weyer:' published in the first volume of his 'Opuscules,' edited by M. Delapierre.

members would be speedily replaced, and that much the same course would be taken which was taken when James II. fled the kingdom, after throwing the Great Seal into the Thames—

'Thus their Government is stable, because they possess natural representatives. It is necessary to reflect in order to feel all the weight of this last word, so simple. . . . . Thus all our establishments, Republic, Empire, Monarchy, are provisional, resembling the great drop-scenes which in turn fill an empty stage, disappearing or reappearing on occasion. We see them descend, reascend, with a sort of indifference. We are inconvenienced on account of the noise, of the dust, of the disagreeable countenances of the hired applauders, but we resign ourselves; for what can we do in the matter?'

M. Taine devotes some pages to aristocratic ascendancy, having discovered unerring signs of it on every side; like the inscriptions on tins of biscuits and pots of pomade, 'Adopted by the nobility and gentry.' B. came to France during the Exhibition, and was surprised at the familiarities of the soldiers. 'When a Captain of the Guides was looking at a picture in a shop-window, two soldiers, standing behind him, bent forward and looked over his shoulder. B. said to me, Such conduct would not be tolerated with us; we have distinctions of ranks.' It was the want of such distinctions that produced the fatal insubordination of the French army during the late war; and both advocates and opponents of the Purchase System were agreed as to the advantages of having an army officered by a class to which the privates could look up. 'Lately (says M. Taine), in a railway carriage, I chatted with some of the Life Guards, two giants and good fellows: they said with pride, 'All our officers are noblemen.'

A medical man was mentioned who had declined a peerage. The Englishman who told M. Taine this added, 'He was right: no man who has held out his

hand for guineas could take his place among peers of the realm.' Mr. Rae, the translator, cites this as an instance in which M. Taine has been led into 'notable error' by inexcusably ignorant persons. 'His informant must have been strangely unacquainted with the fact known to everybody, that barristers not only take guineas, but accept them willingly, and that the more guineas they receive, owing to the increase of their practice, the better are their prospects of a seat on the woolsack and elevation to the peerage. Moreover, at least one member of the House of Lords entered it not many years ago solely because, as a banker, he had handled the money of his customers so judiciously as to have accumulated an enormous fortune.'

It is Mr. Rae who errs from not perceiving the point of the remark. The barrister and the banker do not hold out their hands for guineas. The barrister's fee is paid to his clerk by the attorney, and the banker does not personally receive the money of his customers. The merchant and the shopkeeper both make money by trade, but it is the manner of making it which creates the recognised social difference between the two.

After eighty years of political experiment, involving an incalculable waste of life and property, the French, beginning to despair of liberty, are proud of having attained equality: at least that kind of it under which every man claims to be the equal of his superior and the superior of his equal. After nearly two hundred years of settled government, the English have obtained a reasonable share of liberty, but are content to put up with some social anomalies, the shreds and patches of the past; and M. Taine, forgetting all he has said of the softening, elevating, refining influences of an hereditary aristocracy, sneers at us for not placing an artist or man of letters, merely because he

is an artist or a man of letters, on a level with the noble and the millionaire. It is not enough that he takes his station by their side when he has won his spurs, or that 'a few authors, on account of the moral or political nature of their writings, are considered and esteemed:'—

'According to what my friends tell me, the position of the others is lower than with us. The able journalists who write masterly leading articles three or four times monthly, do not sign their articles, and are unknown to the public. Properly speaking, they are literary hacks. Their article is read at breakfast, as one swallows the bread and butter which is eaten with tea. One no more asks who wrote the article than one asks who made the butter. If next month the article and the butter are of inferior quality, one changes one's newspaper and butterman. No journalist becomes member of Parliament or rises to be a Minister of State, as in France after 1830.'

We are unable to see the injustice of not doing honour to the unknown. It is far from clear to our minds that France has gained at any period by making journalism a stepping-stone to power; and we challenge M. Taine to name a man who has obtained honourable distinction in any walk who is not received on a footing of equality in the most refined circles, provided his habits and tone of mind fit him for blending easily and naturally with them. The fact is, M. Taine has placed too much reliance on the authority of one whose finest veins of thought and observation were alloyed by an unaccountable weakness on this subject. We say 'unaccountable,' because, besides being a man of genius of the kindliest and most generous nature, he was a gentleman by education and by birth. 'I had a conversation with Thackeray, whose name I mention because he is dead, and because his ideas and his conversations are to be found in his books. He confirmed orally all that he had written about the snobbish

spirit. He said that he admired our equality greatly, and that great people are so habituated to see people on their knees before them, that they are shocked when they meet a man of independent demeanour. "I myself," he added, "am now regarded as a suspicious character."'

This is preposterous. 'Great people' are shocked when they meet a man who is deficient in self-respect, who exhibits an uneasy consciousness of social inequality, of which they themselves are unconscious till they are reminded of it by his constrained manner, his air of mock deference, or his sneer. He is not regarded as a suspicious character, but as a jarring or uncomfortable one. He ruffles their self-complacency, is voted ill-bred or vulgar, and let drop. Plutocracy just now is more in the ascendant than aristocracy; but in the social arena, celebrity and agreeability combined beat both.[1]

In a chapter headed 'De l'Esprit Anglais,' M. Taine

[1] Since this was written a work has appeared, entitled 'L'Angleterre Politique et Sociale. Par Auguste Laugel,' the product obviously of much reading, observation, and thought. It is, therefore, the more surprising that the author should have fallen into the double error of overcolouring both aristocracy and plutocracy. At p. 142, he states: 'Under the Sovereign, the Lords are what is most elevated in the nation. For the multitude, for the peasant, for the shopkeeper, even for the radical, the lord is not a man like another. They have no other name for God.' Do not the French say *Mon Seigneur*, and the Germans *Mein Herr?* At p. 145: 'The English aristocracy has its foundation in wealth: its power is not solely like that of nobility properly so called, a power of imagination. That which gives power is property.' At p. 121: 'Without fortune, one can pretend to nothing, neither to social consideration, nor to honours. People refuse to believe in merit, which can obtain nothing for itself: without fortune, Robert Peel, Gladstone, Disraeli, Bright, would have wandered round Parliament all their lives long.' Of course a political aspirant must have wherewithal to pay for a lodging, a dinner, and a clean shirt, but to suppose that what is commonly meant by wealth is essential to success, and cite Mr. Disraeli and Mr. Bright as examples, is most assuredly a mistake. Equally so is it to suppose that social consideration is unattainable except by a millionaire or a lord. A social position may be more easily and rapidly attained by mere wealth in Paris than in London.

maintains that 'the interior of an English head may not unaptly be likened to one of Murray's Handbooks, which contains many facts and few ideas.' But any passing indignation that may be roused by this comparison will abate on finding what sort of ideas he prefers to facts. After finding fault with John Stirling's letter (published by Carlyle) from the West Indies, describing a hurricane, for being a pure statement of facts, he says that the impression produced is the same if we consider in turn the journals, the reviews, and the oratory of the two nations. 'The special correspondent of an English journal is a sort of photographer that forwards proofs taken on the spot, and these are published unaltered.' A French editor would deem himself bound to lighten them, to fling in some clever touches, 'to sum up the whole in a clear idea, embodied in a telling phrase.'

There is a French translation of 'Eothen' in which M. Taine's theory is carried out. The translator, thinking his author deficient in enterprise or 'slow,' has interwoven an affair of gallantry of his own invention, as if it formed part of the original work. This is what M. Taine would call supplying the deficiency of ideas. This deficiency (he says) is particularly remarkable in our English writers on classical antiquity. They are thoroughly versed in Greek, and they have made Greek verses from the time of leaving school:—

'But, they are devoid of ideas, they know the dry bones (*matériel*) of antiquity, but are unable to feel its spirit; they do not picture to themselves its civilisation as a whole, the special characteristic of a southern and polytheistic spirit, the sentiments of an athlete, of a dialectician, of an artist. Look, for example, at Mr. Gladstone's extraordinary commentaries on Homer. Nor has Mr. Grote, in his great "History of Greece," done anything more than write the history of constitutions and political debates.'

These are singularly ill-chosen illustrations. Mr.

Gladstone abounds in ideas: he revels in myths and theories: he is of speculation all compact. One of the finest and most distinctive features of Mr. Grote's History is his appreciation of the spirit of antiquity,[1] and the strictly historical portion is surely not confined to constitutions and political debates. Can M. Taine have read either Mr. Gladstone or Mr. Grote?

We strongly suspect that this is one of several instances (his criticism on English Painting is another) in which he has framed his conclusions by the *à priori* mode of reasoning, or by the rule of conditions and dependencies. But we part from him in perfect good humour, and (what is more) on the best possible terms with ourselves. We English are the least sensitive and consequently the most provoking nation upon earth. *Populus me sibilat, at mihi plaudo.* Although an exasperated public, in both hemispheres, may be crying shame on us for our selfish indifference or neutrality when thrones and presidential chairs are rocking and toppling, or half a continent is laid waste, we point complacently to our accumulated wealth, our boundless resources, our unshaken credit, our laws, our liberty, our flag on which the sun never sets, our time-honoured monarchy hedged round with time-honoured institutions, like the proud keep of Windsor with its triple belt of kindred and coëval towers. We listen with equal equanimity to reflections on our social habits or personal qualities, especially when the estimate is favourable upon the whole. So long as courage, firmness, energy, industry, fidelity, constancy, elevation of mind, and warmth of heart are conceded to us, M. Taine may expatiate as he thinks

[1] We refer M. Taine to (amongst others) ch. xvi. 'Grecian Myths;' ch. xvii. 'The Grecian Mythical compared with that of Modern Europe;' ch. lxvii. 'The Drama, Rhetoric, and Dialectics: the Sophists;' ch. lxviii. 'Socrates.'

fit on the dulness of our Sundays, the humidity of our climate, our unidea'd fondness for facts, our unsentimental regard for duty, the clumsy boots of our women, or the portentous consumption of mutton and strong drinks by our men.

LANFREY'S NAPOLEON.

(From the Quarterly Review for April, 1870.)

*Histoire de Napoléon I^er^*. Par P. Lanfrey. Tome Premier et Tome Deuxième. Paris 1867. Tome Troisième, 1868. Tome Quatrième, 1870.[1]

M. Lanfrey's 'History of Napoleon' is a book which, even in its unfinished state, cannot fail to inspire the highest respect for the author and the deepest interest in the trains of reflection which it suggests. Independently of its merits as a succinct, original, lucid and severely accurate summary of events, it vividly reproduces and helps to solve problems of incalculable importance to society. Is greatness hopelessly incompatible with goodness? Must the brightest of mankind be invariably the meanest? 'The feather that adorns the royal bird supports his flight. Strip him of his

[1] M. Lanfrey is at present French Minister Plenipotentiary for Switzerland. In a letter dated Berne, October 21, 1873, he writes to me: 'Je dois vous avouer en toute franchise que je ne me suis guère occupé de mon *Histoire* depuis deux ans. Ce n'est pas que la vie diplomatique me prenne beaucoup de temps. Mais au milieu des circonstances si critiques que traverse mon pays depuis 1870, les préoccupations du présent et de l'avenir ont fait tort aux études rétrospectives; et j'avoue que je me suis senti peu de goût pour décrire les batailles du premier empire en présence des batailles beaucoup plus actuelles que nous avions à livrer chaque jour. Je préfère avoir laissé la tâche inachevée plutôt que de l'avoir terminée l'esprit distrait par de plus graves soucis. Nous avons maintenant des jours plus tranquilles, et je compte la reprendre avant peu, *si toutefois la nouvelle restauration nous donne tous les loisirs qu'elle nous promet.*' There is a touch of irony in this last sentence; for (without reference to his personal predilections) he did not expect the Restoration, if effected, to succeed.

plumage, and you fix him to the earth.' Is the plumage of soaring ambition made up of deceit, dissimulation, vain-glory, and false pretences? Should we fix it to the earth by stripping off its feathers, or by weighting it with honour, probity, and truth?

Fielding leaves it to be inferred, if he does not actually maintain, that the only essential difference between Jonathan Wild and the conquerors who are popularly called 'the great,' lay in the scale of their respective exploits, in the narrowness or boundlessness of the field on which the common faculty for mischief and lust of rapine was displayed. Nor, if Jonathan had not committed the mistake of getting hanged, is it by any means clear to our minds that he would have failed to command a considerable amount of admiration from the modern school of hero-worshippers, whose sole criterion of merit is success. With them, the means or instruments are little or nothing: the results everything. In their eyes, it is comparatively immaterial whether the coveted celebrity, elevation, or aggrandisement is attained by appealing to the noblest or the basest feelings, by the unbought suffrages of the wise and good, or by flattering and corrupting the foolish and the bad—

'Flectere si nequeo superos, Acheronta movebo.'

Let the aspirant only climb or creep to the highest pinnacle, let him become the enslaver of his country or one of the arbiters of the world's destiny, and he receives full absolution for the past. He has done no wrong: he can do none. Let him, on the other hand, be checked, like Washington, by patriotism or public virtue, and he is relegated at once to the second or third rank of greatness; if, indeed, he is admitted to be in any sense great. Cæsar, Cromwell, and Napoleon are the three self-raised men, the three architects of their own fortunes, who have filled the largest space in history. Neither of these was ever troubled by a

scruple when a decisive step was to be taken or his personal position was at stake; and it is a remarkable fact that the one amongst them whose rise and career are the most wonderful, was the freest from any sort of moral restraint whatever.

Some thirty years since a prize was offered at an Italian university for the best essay on the thesis: 'What man since the creation of the world has acquired the most extended celebrity?' The pre-eminence (after the pretensions of Christ had been duly weighed) was awarded to Napoleon, and a similar pre-eminence would be awarded to him if the question had been, 'What man since the creation of the world has combined so much that is mean, petty, wicked, and reprehensible, with such lofty ambition, such comprehensiveness of view, such grasp of mind, such superhuman energy, such versatility and universality of genius and capacity?'

It may fairly be assumed that M. Lanfrey had this or some such question in his mind when he planned his history, for its clear scope and tendency throughout are to disabuse the public mind of a cherished error, and at least compel a discriminating judgment from posterity. He is the most useful and enlightened of iconoclasts. Improving on Oxenstiern, he says in effect: 'Go and see with how little principle the world is governed; by what paltry arts it may be deluded and enslaved: how power, rank, titles, honours, may be won and kept by talents and qualities combined with knavery and effrontery, which would have been missed or forfeited by the same talents and qualities combined with a sense of honour and self-respect: how often men are exalted by their worst qualities and depressed by their best!' For it is not simply the central figure, with its colossal proportions, that is made to point the moral. The attendant groups are graphically sketched as illustrations of the epoch, and, as was to

be anticipated, the circling satellites reflect the spots without the splendour of their sun.

The discriminating estimate of Napoleon's character and conduct, which now bids fair to become the recognised one, was formed and expressed half a century ago by English writers and statesmen, whose earnest warnings and high-toned protests were attributed to national antipathy and prejudice. How little progress had been made till recently in dissipating the delusive halo that enveloped his name, is shown by the influence of M. Thiers' 'History,' which made that name again a spell to conjure with, a thing of life and motion, which wafted back in triumph the cherished freight of bones (not ashes) from St. Helena, blew the slumbering embers of Imperialism into a flame, and led by an obvious train of causes to the restoration of the dynasty. Factitious effects are never lasting. A rude shock was given to the military infallibility of the idol by Colonel Charras, when he ruthlessly exposed the blunders of the campaign of 1815, with the falsification of facts, dates and documents subsequently perpetrated to cover them. The authors of 'Le Conscrit' did good service by showing the cost of glory in national suffering and privation, and the terrible retribution that may be exacted when the parts of vanquished and victor, invaded and invader, are reversed. But it was reserved for M. Lanfrey to complete the disenchantment, to cast down the brazen image, and compel even worshippers to acknowledge that their adoration has been often miserably misplaced.

The contrasted characters of the two writers, approaching their subject from diametrically opposite directions, rendered inevitable the startling discrepancy between M. Thiers and M. Lanfrey. The brilliant historian of the Consulate and Empire started with a determination to award the entire credit of success to Napoleon when he succeeded, and to throw the entire

blame on his subordinates when he failed; to praise everything that could be praised with a semblance of reason or plausibility, and to excuse or palliate everything that by no possibility of construction could be made to bear praise. He rarely, if ever, thinks of submitting any Napoleonic scheme or exploit to the ordeal of principle, until it has been condemned by what he calls '*la justice des temps*,' *i. e.* by the event; when he blames it (as Talleyrand blamed the execution of the Duc d'Enghien) more as a blunder than a crime.[1] Now, it is the intensity of the moral sense, the love of right, the hatred of injustice, the scorn of falsehood, that constitute the strength of M. Lanfrey, and have enabled him to move among the accumulated mass of trustworthy and apocryphal materials at his disposal, armed, as it were, with the Ithuriel spear of truth.

Incomparably the most important of these, constituting, indeed, the groundwork and main dependence of his work, is the 'Correspondence of Napoleon,' of which the 28th volume, bringing it down to July, 1815, has recently appeared.[2] But a startling amount of new material for Napoleonic history has been brought to light within a few years in the shape of Memoirs, Letters, and Despatches, and the whole of

[1] 'Il y a quelques-uns de ses volumes publiés entre 1851 et 1860, où il (Thiers) a semblé revenir sur ses premiers jugements; mais, somme toute, il a permis aux lecteurs curieux et patients de se faire une vaste idée continue du génie et de la force complexe de son héros.'—('Lettres à la Princesse.' Par C. A. Sainte-Beuve, de l'Académie Française, p. 128).

[2] 'Correspondance de Napoleon Ier, Publiée par Ordre de l'Empereur Napoléon III.' The first sixteen volumes, ending August, 1807, were published without alteration or reserve, and it is these which have been principally laid under requisition by M. Lanfrey, whose fourth volume closes with the battle of Essling (May, 1809). The effect of this unreserved publication on the great man's memory having disappointed expectation, a fresh Commission was issued in 1864, with instructions to be more cautious. The last twelve volumes, therefore, are by no means so compromising or so valuable. An excellent selection has appeared under the title of 'Napoleon Ier Peint par Lui-même.' Par M. Raudot, Ancien Représentant de l'Yonne.' Paris, 1865.

these have been subjected to the minutest investigation by M. Lanfrey, who has thereby been enabled to light up his narrative with numerous traits and touches that give it an air of novelty, even when the scene is crowded with familiar faces and the main action is well known. In his pages the boyhood and early youth of Napoleon arrest attention, although one would have thought that there was nothing new to be said or suggested till we come to the period when the germs of ambition began to stir in him and the distinctive features of his character were fixed.

'I was born,' to use his own words, 'when my country was perishing; the cries of the dying, the groans of the oppressed, the tears of despair, surrounded my cradle from my birth.' So ingrained were these Corsican influences, that he narrowly missed becoming a patriot on a small scale, the vindicator of the oppressed of his native country, instead of the oppressor of half the countries of the globe. To re-enact the part of Paoli and restore the independence of Corsica, was more than the dream of his boyhood. It was his highest ambition for five years after he received his first commission; and for the realisation of this project he ran risks which place his earnestness beyond dispute.

In his seventeenth year (1786), on leaving Brienne, he joined the regiment de la Fère, then in garrison at Valence, with the rank of second lieutenant. He here received that essential part of masculine education which Prince Pückler Muskau calls the education of the drawing-room, and which Lord Chesterfield recommends so strongly and so repeatedly in the famous Letters. He formed a close friendship with a young married woman, attractive and distinguished, who undertook his introduction to society. Not even at this susceptible age, however, does it appear that female influence sank deep. In a 'Dialogue sur l'Amour,' written at Valence, he gravely and seriously

lays down, that 'Love does more harm than good, and it would be the good deed of a protecting divinity to rid us of it.' He began a history of Corsica at Valence, and in 1791 he published his 'Lettre à Matteo Buttafuoco,' the principal instrument of Choiseul in the annexation of Corsica to France, who is overwhelmed with invective and contumely, whilst Paoli is exalted to the skies. Buttafuoco sat as deputy of the Corsican nobility in the Convention, and a passage in the letter alluding to this circumstance is a curiosity, as regards both sentiment and style:

'O Lameth! O Robespierre! O Petion! O Volney! O Mirabeau! O Barnave! O Bailey! O Lafayette. Behold the man who dares to seat himself by your side. All dripping with the blood of his brothers, sullied by crimes of every kind. . . . As if he were the choice of the people! They have done to his effigy what they would have been glad to do to his person.'

It was in Corsica that the embryo great man first tried his hand at a *coup-d'état*, and it was there, again, that recovering as by a strong effort from his fever of public virtue, he definitively laid aside the loyalty and disinterestedness of his youth. Each of these episodes is illustrative; each of them casts its shadow before.

'The bargain (says M. Lanfrey) is struck. At the moment when history is about to take possession of Bonaparte, calculation and ambition have already got the better of all other motives. Behold him disengaged from every scruple of opinion, steeled against every political predilection, on the best terms with the conquerors without being irreconcilable with the conquered, disembarrassed of all the generous illusions of the past, and measuring in his mind's eye the unlimited field opening before him. This predestined of glory has already no counsellor but his insatiable genius, no rule but a certain ideal of greatness, and what he himself calls circumstances, that is, accomplished facts, success, fortune. Let the opportunity arise, he will not let it escape. It did not delay presenting itself with an *éclat* beyond his hopes.'

The siege of Toulon was the commencement of his military reputation, which rose with unprecedented rapidity during the Italian campaign of 1794. This he really directed whilst acting as General of Artillery under Dumerbion, an old and worn-out officer, who commanded in chief. Compromised by his connexion with the Robespierres, he was recalled: his fortunes once more hung wavering in the balance, and absolute destitution stared him in the face. In the summer or early autumn of 1795, during the financial crisis brought on by the over-issue of assignats, he was so pressed for money as to be obliged to share the slender resources of Junot and Bourrienne, and even to sell his books. His state of mind under these trials is described as fluctuating between ardent hope, high imaginings, and blank despondency. There were moments when he dreamed of nothing more than a comfortable retreat in the country, with the calm of domestic life; and it will be remembered that the Duke of Wellington, when a subaltern, exhibited a parallel blindness to what Providence had in store for him, by applying to a Lord Lieutenant (Lord Camden) for a Commissionership of Customs.

The extraordinary restlessness and versatility of the nascent hero of twenty-six, combined with his love of excitement, led him to make a passing study of Parisian society, which was just emerging after a long eclipse, and making up for lost time by free indulgence in luxury, dissipation, and intrigue. His impressions are given in a letter to his brother Joseph, July 12, 1795:—

'The carriages, the fine world, reappear, or rather they remember, only as they would remember a long dream, that they have ever ceased to shine. . . . Everything is brought together to distract and make life pleasant. We are torn from our reflections; and be low-spirited if you can, in this activity of mind and this unceasing whirl. The women are

everywhere—at the theatres, on the public walks, in the libraries. In the cabinet of the *savant* you see very pretty persons. Here alone, of all places of the earth, they deserve to hold the rudder: the men consequently run mad about them, think only of them, live only by and for them. A woman requires six months to learn what is due to her and what her empire is.'

Yet this empire of woman, which was her due, was rudely, contemptuously, cruelly set aside the moment its mildest, most appropriate influence was exerted within his own.

His value was too well known to admit of prolonged neglect or forgetfulness. On the arrival of bad news from the army of Italy, Pontecoulant, the war-minister, sent for Napoleon, to attach him to the Committee by which plans of operations for the various armies were prepared. He drew up for Kellermann, the commander-in-chief of that army, and a little later for his successor, Scherer, a series of instructions comprising all the principal combinations which he afterwards carried out in the first and most brilliant of his Italian campaigns. Their reception is the best evidence of his superiority. Kellermann replied that 'their author was only fit for a lunatic asylum,' and Scherer that 'it was for him who had conceived to realise them,' a sarcasm which turned out a sound and just appreciation of their merit. Bonaparte was far from mortified at their rejection. He was at no time anxious for others to acquire glory at his expense, and it was as a man of action, not a man of ideas, that he felt predestined to shine. On August 12, he wrote to Joseph:—'I am constantly in the state of mind in which one is at the eve of a battle, convinced by sentiment that when death is there in the midst to end all, to be anxious is folly. All leads me to brave chance and destiny, and if that lasts, my friend, I shall end by not turning aside to avoid a carriage.' As if to complete the contrast,

on September 25, 1795, ten days before the affair of the Sections, his name was struck out of the list of Generals in active service, to gratify some grudge of the war-minister.

The scene of action was the hall of the section Le Peletier, which had taken the lead in opposition to the Convention. Their troops were commanded by Menou, who hesitated at the critical moment, and began to treat instead of calling on the sectionaries to lay down their arms and disperse. The result was a truce by which the troops were to retire and the insurgents were to evacuate the hall. The troops retired, the insurgents remained, and hastened to proclaim what all Paris accepted as their victory. The tumult was at its height between eight and nine in the evening. Bonaparte was at the theatre Feydeau. On hearing what was going on, he repaired to the hall, witnessed the conclusion of the scene, and then hastened to the Assembly. They had just decreed the arrest of Menou, and were discussing the different Generals to whom it would be best to intrust the command. Bonaparte, unseen amongst the audience, heard his own name proposed, and hesitated 'during nearly half an hour' on the part he should have to take. This rests solely on his own authority in his Memoirs. What is more trustworthy, remarks M. Lanfrey, is that the name which united most suffrages was that of Barras, then in some sort the arbiter of the situation, thanks to the recollection of his energetic conduct on the 9th Thermidor.

Barras caused Bonaparte to be nominated along with him; a circumstance which has been suppressed in each of the three versions which Bonaparte has left of this most important episode of his life. The sole command practically devolved on him. The army of the Convention did not exceed eight thousand men: that of the Sections fell little short of forty thousand; but the advantage of discipline was on his side; he had, more-

over, forty pieces of artillery, which his adversaries, not yet acquainted with their man, did not expect to be used against them. He posted his troops in the Louvre and the Tuileries, converting them into a kind of entrenched camp, and guarding all the approaches with cannon. The sectionaries were commanded by General Danican, an officer of small capacity, and by a returned emigrant, Lafond, a young man of the most brilliant courage. On finding the preparations made for their reception, they halted and remained inactive during the greater part of the day (13th Vendémiaire). At about half-past four Danican gave the signal and Bonaparte mounted his horse. The battle was soon over. The heads of the attacking columns were mowed down by grapeshot in whatever direction they advanced; and after being three times rallied by Lafond, the boldest gave way and the victory of the Convention was complete. Such amongst them as really desired order or regular government had small ground for self-congratulation, for this fatal day was the triumph of the soldier over the citizen: it taught power to rely upon the army, and the army to dispose of power. It prepared the way for a military dictatorship, and its first fruits were reaped by the self-same man who was to profit by it most largely in the end.

Barras having resigned in his favour, Bonaparte was declared General of the Interior; and the manner in which he used his opportunities shews both his own grasping character and the absence of legal checks on the cupidity or ambition of any one who could contrive to work himself into a position of influence or command. Besides assuming the entire control of the regular troops, the National Guard, and the military arrangements of the capital, he claimed a voice in most civil affairs, protected emigrants, recalled dismissed officers, distributed commissions amongst his creatures, gave away places to his friends and relations,

whom he sent for expressly, and transmitted large sums of money to his family. The Directory, which had only just been established by his instrumentality, regarded his proceedings with distrust; and fear or jealousy had probably quite as much to do with his nomination to the command of the army of Italy as admiration or gratitude.[1]

There was also another motive which actuated their leading spirit, Barras, whose share in promoting Bonaparte's private and public interests at this conjuncture he and his partisans have been anxious to shade over or suppress. A touching incident had just brought him acquainted with Josephine, Madame de Beauharnais, whose relations with Barras were of the most intimate and confidential kind, although we are quite ready to believe that the popular reflections on her reputation were unjust.

M. Thiers speaks of Bonaparte as having felt for her 'only a *goût* that time had dissipated, an esteem that many instances of lightness had diminished.' According to M. Lanfrey, 'he had conceived an ardent and exalted passion for her, fanned by the knowledge that this marriage would at the same time give him the part (*rôle*) he most longed for, and open to him the ranks of a society which had hitherto answered his advances by excessive distrust. He threw into this affection—the only one, it is said, which ever made his heart beat—all the eagerness and fire of his impetuous nature. As to Madame de Beauharnais, she felt in his presence more trouble and astonishment than love.' She herself has related how her consent was mainly brought about by the offer of Barras to make her a wedding present of the command of the army of Italy. 'Barras,' she wrote

[1] Proofs are said to be forthcoming from Austrian and German archives of the extent to which at this early period of his career he influenced the foreign policy of France.

shortly before the marriage, 'assures me that, if I marry the general, he will procure this command for him. Yesterday Bonaparte was speaking to me of this favour, which is already causing murmurs amongst his professional brethren, although not yet granted. "Do they believe that I need protection to rise? They will all be too happy one of these days if I deign to grant them mine. My sword is by my side, and with it I shall go far (*j'irai loin*)."'

He spoke with the proud consciousness of genius, and he had done enough to justify it; but she did not love him enough to catch confidence from his inspiration, and it was with a marked presentiment of self-sacrifice that she gave her hand. He was named General-in-Chief of the army of Italy on the 23rd February, 1796, and the marriage was celebrated on the 9th of March, the bridegroom adding a year to his real age, and the bride deducting four years from hers, in the register. He was in his twenty-seventh year and she thirty-two.

Former historians have emulously, and with good reason, expatiated on the originality and brilliancy of the ensuing campaign, with its results. It was reserved for M. Lanfrey to fix attention on the avowed object for which hostilities were undertaken, and the fresh set of motives by which the French soldier was urged on. The Republican armies had hitherto fought, or pretended to fight, for liberty. They were now about to fight professedly for conquest and plunder. Bonaparte's instructions, which he interpreted in the widest and worst sense, were to excite rebellion, to acquire stated territories by force or fraud, to annex or barter them, and to make the war pay its own expenses whether it was carried on in a friendly or an enemy's country. His first proclamation to the army ran thus:—

'Soldiers! you are badly fed and almost naked. The

Government owes you much: it can do nothing for you. Your patience, your courage, do you honour, but procure you neither profit nor glory. I am about to lead you into the most fertile country of the world. You will find large cities and rich provinces. You will find honour, glory, and riches. Soldiers of Italy! shall you want courage?'

'It was not in a day,' remarks M. Lanfrey, 'that the soldiers of the Republic became the soldiers of the Empire, but the commencement of the metamorphosis dates from this proclamation, in which Italy was shown to them, not as a nation to liberate, but as a prey to seize.'

An unbroken and rapid series of victories soon placed nearly the whole of Italy at the mercy of the invaders, and an organised system of plunder began. Overstepping his powers without ceremony when it suited him, acting throughout like a sovereign prince at the head of a conquering army, he replied to all remonstrances from his employers, the Directory, by announcing fresh triumphs and pouring millions upon millions into their exhausted treasury. After the conclusion of an armistice, which he was expressly forbidden to conclude, he writes:—

'If, however, you do not accept the peace with the King of Sardinia, if your project is to dethrone him, you must amuse him for some weeks, and let me know at once. I will take possession of Valence and march on Turin. . . . I will impose some millions on the Duke of Parma; he will make proposals for peace: be in no hurry to close with him, so that I may have time to make him pay the expense of the campaign.'

Genoa had been required to pay three millions by way of indemnity for a pretended wrong. The French minister there was now directed by Bonaparte to exact fifteen. In a second proclamation he reminds his army that 'the ashes of the conquerors of Tarquin were still

trodden under foot by the assassins of Bassonville,'[1] and, after promising the 'conquest' of Italy as the recompence of renewed exertions, he concludes with this astounding apostrophe:—'People of Italy! the army of Italy comes to break your chains; the French nation is the friend of every people: meet her half-way with confidence.' The declared mission of the French nation was to deliver the Milanese, and the Milanese is thus commended by the Directors to the particular attention of the General:

'Above all, you must not spare the Milanese; levy contributions in cash directly, and during the first terror inspired by the approach of our troops, let a strict eye be kept to the application of the proceeds.'

The next paragraph is unique in its way:

'If Rome makes advances, the first thing to exact is that the Pope shall immediately order public prayers for the prosperity of the French arms. Some of her fine monuments, her statues, her medals, her libraries, her silver Madonnas, and even her church bells, will indemnify us for the expense that your visit will cost us.'

This kind of plunder is one that is never forgotten or forgiven by the sufferers. It is a national insult as well as a national loss. It was the outrage most keenly resented when the hour of retribution came and indignant Europe rose against the French. Whether Bonaparte or the Directory instituted it, is left in doubt; but he did not wait for their instructions to extend it beyond the limits indicated by them. By the suspension of arms with the Duke of Parma he had stipulated for a sum of two millions, twelve hundred horses with their harness, twenty pictures, including the St. Jerome which the Duke vainly endeavoured to ransom by another million, and supplies of every sort for the

[1] The French ambassador assassinated at Rome.

army. By another suspension of arms, imposed on the Duke of Modena, he exacted ten millions, with twenty pictures to be chosen by commissaries. By a decree published the day after his entry into Milan, he levied on Lombardy (which he came to liberate) a contribution of twenty millions in money, besides a million in pictures and objects of art. All this was in addition to private plunder and exaction, which had been carried to so frightful an excess as (to use his own expression) 'makes one blush for mankind.'[1] At the same time he wrote to the Directory, 'These poor fellows are excusable. After languishing three years on the summit of the Alps, they reach the promised land: they wish to enjoy it.'

The promised land! Who taught them to regard Italy in that light? What wonder if they claimed the literal fulfilment of the promise, and gave unchecked indulgence to cupidity and lust? With his tacit connivance, the generals and other leading functionaries made large fortunes—at least such of them as he desired to attach to his own; for his knowledge of their proceedings, by placing them in his power, became the best guarantee for their fidelity. At the same time he remained, personally, incorruptible. He was playing for too high a stake to care about pecuniary gains. He was already looking forward to the time when he should be able to dispose of national or imperial revenues at his pleasure. An instance of this calculated disinterestedness as regards money is related on his authority by Las Casas. During the negotiations with the Duke of Modena, Salicetti came to him in his cabinet, to say that the Commandeur d'Este, brother of the Duke, was waiting without with four

[1] 'Passing the Apennines with soldiers, brave, but dying of hunger, his first care was to lay on the riches of Italy a discreet, honest (*probe*), economical hand, to prevent their being wasted, to employ them to support his army in abundance, and to drag from misery the army of the Rhine, which was to co-operate in his plans.'—(Thiers, vol. xx. 722.)

millions of gold in four chests. 'He comes in his brother's name, to interest you to accept them, and I advise you to do so. I am from your country; I know your family affairs; the Directory and the Corps Législatif will not recompense your services. This is yours: accept it without scruple and without publicity.' 'I thank you,' was the cold reply; 'I am not going to place myself at the disposition of the Duke of Modena for such a sum'—nor (he might have added) at the disposition of Salicetti either.

A regular agent had been nominated by decree to attend upon the army and collect objects of art and science to be transported to Paris, with full authority to demand horses and carriages for their conveyance from the cities robbed of them. Objects of art and science were interpreted to mean all objects of luxury, horses amongst the rest. Bonaparte selected a hundred of the finest in Lombardy as a present to the Directors, 'to replace,' he said, 'the ordinary horses which draw your carriages.' At the suggestion of Turguet, the Minister of Marine, the General's attention was directed to the naval stores, timber, hemp, sail-cloth, &c., to be found in any of the Italian States, Roman, Neapolitan, or Tuscan:—

'Is it not fitting,' he wrote, 'that each of these States shall provide and transport to Toulon the quantities they can produce or have already in their magazines? *Let us make Italy proud of having contributed to the éclat of our marine.* This, it seems to me, is seconding the views of the numerous patriots of these countries who enjoy the noble pride of having co-operated in the equipment and the success of the armies of the republic.'

Strange epoch, when such is the confusion of ideas, that rapacity spoke the language of patriotism, and patriotism that of rapacity, mixing them up so completely that it was difficult to say which of the two sentiments was uppermost. There was another lan-

guage in which Bonaparte was proficient, another mode of reconciling the victims to their fate. He came, forsooth, in the name of the heroes of classical antiquity to liberate their descendants. Thus in the proclamation to his soldiers, heralding an advance on Rome :—

'Let the people be without alarm. We are the friends of every people, and more particularly of the descendants of the Brutuses, the Scipios, and the great men whom we have taken for models. To restore the Capitol, honourably instal in it the statues of the heroes who made themselves famous, revive the Romans benumbed by ages of slavery, such will be the fruit of our victories. They will form an epoch for posterity, you will have the undying glory of changing the face of the finest part of Europe.'

This glory they certainly had in more senses than one. Their track was marked by devastation; and such alterations of government as they effected were for the worse. Again, in his instructions to the officer whom he soon after despatched to Corfu: 'If the inhabitants of the country are inclined to independence, flatter their taste, and do not fail, in your proclamations, to speak to them of Greece, Athens, and Rome.'

Neither classical associations, nor dreams of liberty, nor the noble pride of glutting French rapacity, long sufficed to blind the Lombards to the real character of the invasion. The peasantry rose and were ruthlessly shot down or sabred. All the priests and nobles in the rebel communes were ordered to be arrested and carried as hostages to France; all the villages where the tocsin should be sounded to be burnt to the ground. An attempt, which deceived no one, was made to represent this rising as a conspiracy set on foot by the monks and encouraged by the nobility. It was the convulsive throe of the industrious, hard-working part of the population, driven to desperation by the most profligate system of exaction that ever was conceived or carried out in a civilised community.

Precisely when these atrocities were at their height, when the army of Italy was burning, plundering, and murdering wholesale in a country with which they affected to fraternise, the Directors were celebrating a fête to Victory in honour of their exploits, and, as if to make the mockery complete, Carnot, the austere republican, was chosen to pronounce a discourse, in which the honour due to valour was blended with the praise of filial love, of paternal love, of sensibility, and (above all) of humanity. 'O humanity!' was his apostrophe, 'how delicious are thy practices, and how much to be pitied is the greedy soul (*âme avide*) that knows thee not!'

It was difficult to apply the fraternising principle to Venice, from which no popular call had come for liberators, which had cautiously avoided giving the semblance of offence by observing an unarmed neutrality. But the fate reserved for the mistress of the Adriatic was the hardest and least merited of all. She was to be robbed of her independence, degraded, impoverished, and reduced to the condition of a subject province, for no imaginable reason but that it suited the French Republic and their General so to deal with her. It was the ever-recurring story of the wolf and the lamb. Venice was charged with being the ally of Austria, on the ground that the Austrians had been permitted to occupy Peschiera, of which they had taken military occupation by surprise. Turning a deaf ear to the proffered explanation, Bonaparte garrisoned Peschiera, which the Austrians had abandoned at his approach, and frightened the Venetian plenipotentiaries into a convention, by which French troops were to be admitted into Verona, and the French army to be supplied with provisions and munitions of war on credit, *i.e.* without paying for them. He then wrote to the Directors:—

'If your project is to extract five or six millions from

Venice, I have purposely contrived this sort of rupture. If you have more decided intentions, I believe it will be necessary to continue this subject of quarrel; let me know what you wish done, and wait for a favourable moment, which I will seize according to circumstances, for it will not do to have all the world on our hands at once. . . . . The *truth of the affair of Peschiera is that Beaulieu (the Austrian commander) put a disgraceful trick upon them. He demanded a passage for fifty men, and so got possession of the town.*'

The shamelessness of the pretext is complacently communicated to his government, in the confident expectation, justified by the result, that it would conciliate their favour instead of provoking a reproof; and it was on the strength of a quarrel, got up in this fashion, that Venice was soon afterwards reduced to the condition of a plundered and oppressed dependency. The turn of the Pope came next, and there was no need of inventing pretexts against his Holiness, who had waged a kind of religious war against the Republic, as the arch-enemy of the Faith, and left the assassination of its ambassador, Bassonville, unavenged. Such was the popular detestation of sacerdotal rule, that, on the first appearance of the French in the Legations, they were received as liberators, and Bonaparte, who aimed only at exaction for the present, took advantage of the alarm into which the Papal Government was thrown, to dictate his terms. The price of a suspension of arms was settled at twenty-one millions, fifteen in money and the rest in supplies, a hundred pictures, five hundred manuscripts, the provisionary occupation of Ancona, Bologna, and Ferrara, and (to crown all with a bit of telling republicanism) the busts of Junius and Marcus Brutus.

This suspension was only a short respite for his Holiness. A fresh succession of victories, Arcola, Rivoli, Tolentino, completed the discomfiture of one Austrian army after another, and Bonaparte was soon

at leisure to revert to the Papal Government, which was driven to desperation. 'We will turn the Romagna into a Vendée,' exclaimed Cardinal Busca, and bands of peasants were seen led by monks, crucifix in hand. But the electric spark was wanting: the first Papal army, which the French encountered at Castel-Bologna, was easily routed, and took to flight: the second, at Ancona, surrendered at discretion, without firing a shot. The Pope was at the mercy of the conqueror, whose policy was not to break with his Holiness outright, much less to deprive him entirely of his temporalities. Bonaparte had written not long before to Clarke, the minister of war, that France was becoming Roman Catholic again, and that they might stand in need of the co-operation of the Pope in an easily conceivable contingency. There were other pressing reasons for not pushing matters to extremity, and, prudently refraining from entering Rome in person, he signed a treaty, by which he stipulated for the abandonment of the Legations, the Romagna, and Ancona to the French, and the payment of an additional fifteen millions. He then sent an autograph letter to notify this treaty to the Pope, who was assured that the French Republic would henceforth be one of the best friends of Rome, and that nothing could exceed the esteem and veneration entertained for his sacred person by their General. At the same time he wrote to the Directory:—

'My opinion is that Rome, once deprived of Bologna, Ferrara, the Romagna, and the thirty millions we take from her, can exist no longer; this old machine will fall to pieces of itself.'

In another letter of the same date he adds:—

'The commission of *savants* has reaped a good harvest at Ravenna, Rimini, Pesaro, Ancona, Loretto, and Perugia: all will be sent to Paris without delay. Adding it to what will be sent from Rome, we shall have everything fine (*tout ce*

qu'il y a de beau) in Italy, except a small number of objects which are at Turin and Naples.'

The churches in the ceded provinces were robbed of all articles of value which had been accumulated by the piety or superstition of ages. Our Lady of Loretto was stripped of ornaments in gold, silver, and jewels to the value of above a million, and the wooden image of the Virgin was transported to Paris, where it remained till the Concordat. The wonder is that the Casa Santa—the Holy House—was not carried off in pieces and set up in the Place des Victoires, where its appearance might have been announced as a repetition of the miracle, or it would have cost only an Ossianic figure to declare that the eagle of victory had brought it, as the Brobdingnag eagle carried Gulliver's wooden residence, in its beak.

Bonaparte had no sooner settled with Rome than he turned his exclusive attention to the Austrian army, commanded by the Archduke Charles, which he pursued across the Alps without waiting for the co-operation of the army of the Rhine, till he found himself dangerously distant from his base of operations. The situation was so critical, that he at once adopted the expedient of addressing to the Archduke a letter in which he invited him to merit the title of benefactor of humanity, declaring for himself that, if the overture he had the honour to make could save the life of a single man, he should be prouder of the civic crown which he should have merited thereby than of the melancholy glory which can result from military successes! The puzzle is, why he should be constantly going out of his way to use language which could deceive no one—which was notoriously at variance with his actions, his feelings, and his thoughts. It was impossible for a commander to be more indifferent to human life, or more prodigal of blood, and in answer to the excuse that he was so only by calculation and when a given

object was to be obtained, M. Lanfrey recalls the curious fact of his ordering a skirmish for the amusement of his mistress. His own words to Las Casas were :—

'Riding with her one day in the middle of our positions in the environs of the hill of Tenda, whilst reconnoitring as commandant of the artillery, the notion suddenly occurred to me of treating her to the spectacle of a little war, and I ordered an attack of advanced posts. We were the conquerors, it is true, but there could evidently be no result. The attack was a pure fancy, and yet some men fell in it. Later (*plus tard*) I have bitterly reproached myself with this affair whenever it has recurred to me.'

'Later' means when, on the rock of St. Helena, he was no longer able to sacrifice hecatombs of human beings to his ambition or his caprice—when it had become a passion to compose an attractive character for posterity.[1] His classical reminiscences must have been at fault, or he would have reflected that Flamininus was expelled the Senate by Cato for killing a noble Gaul to amuse a favourite.

The overture to the Archduke led to the preliminaries of Leoben, in which the main point to be settled was what portions of territory Austria and France should respectively retain, it being clearly understood between them that the rights of independent and neutral States were not to stand in the way of any arrangement that might suit both parties. At first the proposal went no farther than to offer Austria an indemnity out of the dependencies of Venice; but the notion of dealing with the unhappy republic as a subject of barter was speedily matured into a transaction which has no parallel in history, except the partition of Poland; and even the partition of Poland was not marked by the wanton expenditure of so much false profession or by such cynical contempt for truth.

[1] It was in this spirit that he spoke to Ségur of a useless sacrifice of life at Toulon.

Nothing can be clearer than that Bonaparte's mind was made up on this subject before the popular commotions, excited by French treatment, gave him a pretext for an open declaration of hostilities. His language to the trembling deputies of the Senate, who offered *carte blanche* in the way of satisfaction, ran thus:—

'I have eighty thousand men, I have gunboats, I will have no more inquisition, no more senate, I will be an Attila to Venice. . . . I want no more alliances with you, I will have none of your projects, I will give you the firm land. . . . There is no good in deceiving me to gain time.'

In their report to the Senate the deputies are obliged to own that the details of the treaty are unknown to them—that the secret of the conditions is impenetrable: 'God grant that this mystery does not conceal the partition of the republic.' The very worst of their fears fell short of the reality. The civilised world had yet to learn the full scope of Madame Roland's dying apostrophe to Liberty, and grey-headed Italian diplomatists, familiar with Macchiavelli, stood aghast, when it broke upon them, at the profound corruption of the French General of twenty-eight. After concluding a treaty which, hard as were the terms, left the republic the semblance of independence, he wrote to the Directors that his sole object in concluding it was to enter the city without difficulty and get possession of the arsenal. He then despatched an emissary to take possession of Corfu and all the Venetian establishments in the Levant, and the same day wrote to the municipality of Venice to invite their confidence, ending:—

'In all circumstances I will do all in my power to give you proofs of my desire to consolidate your liberty, and to see unhappy Italy finally take her place with glory, free and independent of strangers, on the stage of the world, and re-

sume amongst great nations the rank to which she is called by nature, her position, and her destiny.'

The day after (May 27th) he transmitted the heads of the proposed treaty with Austria, including this: '*Pour l'Italie:* 1° *Venise à l'Empereur.*' As this went beyond his instructions, he proceeds to justify it:—

'Venice, which has been declining since the discovery of the Cape of Good Hope, and the rise of Trieste and Ancona, can hardly survive the shock we have given her. With a population inapt, cowardly, in nowise made for liberty, without land, without waters, it seems natural that she should be left to those to whom we give the firm land. We shall take all the vessels, we shall strip the arsenal, we shall carry off all the cannon; we shall destroy the forts; we shall keep Corfu and Ancona for ourselves.'

The pretext under which this wholesale robbery was carried on adds, if possible, to the infamy of the proceeding. He directs two of his generals to accompany the French Minister to the Provisional Government of Venice, and state that the conformity of principles now existing between the French Republic and the Republic of Venice requires that she shall promptly put her marine on a respectable footing to co-operate in protecting their commerce. 'You will take possession of all under this pretext, having constantly in your mouths the unity of the two Republics, and always making use of the name of the Venetian Marine.'

During the negotiations for peace, Bonaparte had taken up his residence at Montebello, a magnificent château near Milan, where he lived in quasi-regal state, dining in public, giving audience to ministers and deputations, disposing of provinces, and mapping out republics. Josephine had joined him and was holding drawing-rooms like a queen. A report having reached Paris that he meant to make himself king of Italy, Madame de Stäel mentioned it to Augereau, who replied, '*Non assurément, c'est un jeune homme trop bien élevé pour cela.*' He meant to make himself in France

what he had already made himself in Italy. 'Do you suppose,' he remarked to Prince Pignatelli, 'that I am gaining triumphs to make the fortunes of the advocates of the Directory, the Carnots and Barras?' But seeing (to use his own phrase) that the pear was not yet ripe, he procrastinated his appearance on the scene, and when the Directory, in anticipation of a *coup-d'état*, were looking about for a general, he sent them Augereau, who did the military work required for bringing about the change of government which goes by the name of 18th Fructidor. The new Directory, in which Carnot was replaced by a nonentity, were obliged to let Bonaparte have his way in everything, and had no alternative but to confirm the treaty concluded by him at Campo Formio (17th October, 1797), although contrary to their instructions and their real wishes. On the 19th September he wrote to them: —

'I must know if your intention is to accept these propositions or not. If your ultimatum should be not to comprise the city of Venice in the Emperor's part, I doubt whether the peace will be made (*Venice, however, is the city of all Italy most worthy of liberty*) and hostilities will recommence in the course of October.'

The reply of the Directory dwelt upon the imprudence of giving the Emperor Italy to the Adige, and the shame of abandoning Venice. But on the 10th October, Bonaparte signified his intention to adhere to his own project of peace. He had already replied to Talleyrand, who advocated the views of the Directory, that he (Talleyrand) knew nothing of this 'effeminate, superstitious, pantaloon, and cowardly people.' The Italian nation was enervated without courage; it has no more taste for liberty than for a military organisation strong enough to compel respect. 'As to what was good to put into proclamations and printed discourses, all this was but a romance.' He had the superb audacity to write (October 10) to the

Directors, that he had thought only of the country and the government:—

'It only remains for me to return into the crowd, to resume the ploughshare of Cincinnatus, to give the example of respect for the magistracy, and of aversion from the military *régime*, which has destroyed so many republics and ruined so many states.'

All who shared his confidence and intimacy at the time,—Lavalette, Marmont, Biot, Bourrienne,—attest that he made the peace to have the exclusive credit of making it, and to avoid sharing the possible glories of the next campaign with the army of the Rhine. Farther delay might have brought him into difficulties with the Directors; so at the next interview with the Austrian plenipotentiary, the Count de Cobentzel, who was procrastinating, he rose suddenly in the midst of the conference, took from a stand a porcelain tray, the gift of the Empress Catherine to the Count, and dashed it to pieces on the floor, exclaiming, 'It is thus that in less than a month I shall have shattered your monarchy.' He declared the truce at an end, and with a bow to the negotiators left the room.

In the course of the next day (October 17, 1797) the Articles were drawn up and signed; by ten o'clock in the evening all the signatures were affixed; and at midnight Monge and Berthier started to carry the Treaty to the Directors. During the whole day Bonaparte was in one of his happiest moods. A part of the evening is said to have been passed by him in imagining humorous scenes and telling ghost-stories. Twelve hours afterwards a courier arrived from the Directory peremptorily prohibiting the main article—the cession of Italy (including Venice) to the Adige—and intimating an intention to name negotiators to 'relieve him of political duties and leave him wholly to his military dispositions.' The peace was hailed by an explosion of joy in Paris, and the Directors, far from venturing

to repudiate or reprove, were compelled to ratify and congratulate.

Bonaparte arrived in Paris on December 5, at his small hotel in the Rue de la Chantereine, which on this occasion was rebaptized Rue de la Victoire by the municipality. His manners and movements were adroitly regulated so as to stimulate the universal curiosity and interest he inspired. He was rarely seen in public, and never otherwise than reserved and self-possessed. The time was not arrived when he could afford to throw off the mask and indulge his natural humour:—

> 'For well had Conrad learn'd to curb the crowd,
> By arts that veil, and oft preserve, the proud;
> His was the lofty port, the distant mien
> That seems to shun the sight—and awes if seen.'

The Directory had no alternative but to give him a magnificent reception. An altar *de la Patrie* was erected in the court of the Luxembourg, loaded with trophies, surmounted with allegorical statues, the walls draped with banners, and a vast amphitheatre constructed all around. Here the Directors, the officials, and the diplomatic corps in full dress, received the guest. An immense crowd filled the court and the neighbouring streets, and his appearance was the signal for deafening and frequently renewed acclamations. Talleyrand spoke first, and speedily transgressed the line which separates the sublime from the ridiculous. After exalting the military exploits and capacity of the young hero to the skies, the orator painted the victor of Lodi and Arcola as a stoic detached from all worldly grandeur, having no taste except for simplicity, obscurity, the abstract sciences, and 'that sublime Ossian which seemed to detach him from the earth.' Not only was there no reason to dread his ambition, but 'there might come a day perhaps when it would be necessary to tear him from the leisure of his studious retreat.'

The reply was more in Cromwell's manner than in that which subsequently became habitual to Bonaparte. It was studiously obscure and confined to generalities, one of which, however, was eminently suggestive: 'When the happiness of the French people shall be based upon better organic laws, all Europe will become free.' Barras, who followed, compared him to Socrates, Cæsar, and Pompey in succession, lavished the basest adulation on the framer of the peace which he (Barras) had privately denounced as infamous, and then, pointing to England as the next country to be conquered and liberated like Venice, exclaimed:—

'Go, go and enchain this gigantic pirate which weighs upon the seas, go and punish in London outrages too long unpunished. Numerous adorers of liberty await you there: you are the liberator to whom humanity by her plaintive cries appeals.'

Thereupon the orator administered the *accolade* or official embrace, and the artistes of the Conservatoire executed a hymn composed by Chenier and Méhul. The *fête* was even more ridiculous on the whole than that offered to the Goddess of Reason; and it is wonderful that such men could meet to interchange such puerilities without, like the Roman augurs, laughing in each other's faces.

During a brief interval the Directory and Bonaparte remained equally watchful and distrustful. It was their object to get him out of Paris, to occupy him, no matter in what quarter of the world, with dreams of conquest; and when he declined to attempt the invasion of England with the inadequate means at his disposal, they were only too happy to offer him *carte blanche* for the expedition to Egypt, an original and pet conception of his own. The idea of carrying the élite of the French army to a distant country, where its communications were almost certain to be cut off, at a moment

when all Europe was hostile, if not actually in arms against France, is justly regarded by M. Lanfrey as little less wild than that of carrying the Grand Army to Moscow in 1812; and the parallel will be strengthened by an examination of the results, although the minor disaster was permitted to pass without immediate condemnation through circumstances and owing to the comparative smallness of the scale.

What Bonaparte aimed at was glory of the most dazzling sort, glory by which the popular imagination could be caught. 'In this point of view' (to use his own words) 'your little Europe is but a molehill, and could not supply glory enough; I will go and demand it of the East, of that land of wonders which alone has seen great empires and great revolutions, and is inhabited by six hundred millions of men.' 'Nothing,' he would say to his intimates, 'is remembered in Paris: if I remain long without doing anything I am lost. When they have seen me three times at the theatre, they will not turn to look at me again.' He also calculated on the incapacity of the generals he left behind. 'That he might become master of France, it was necessary that the Directory should meet with reverses in his absence, and that his return should bring back victory to our standards.'

The money required for the expedition was procured by the plunder of Rome and Switzerland, with whom quarrels were opportunely got up. At Berne alone, Brune, who acted under the especial direction of Bonaparte, seized more than sixteen millions in money or bullion, seven millions in arms or munitions, eighteen millions in forced supplies of provisions. When all was ready, Bonaparte hesitated, struck either by the imminent risks he was about to run, or tempted to make use of his opportunities and upset the Directory at once. Suspecting something of the sort, they ordered his departure, on which he took fire and tendered his

resignation. Rewbell coolly held out a pen: 'Give it us in writing, General; the Republic has still children left who will not abandon her.' He took the pen, but allowed Merlin to take it from him, and spoke no more of resigning. At Toulon he issued a proclamation to his army, reminding them of what they had done and won in Italy, and ending, 'I promise every soldier that, on his return from this expedition, he shall have at his disposal enough to buy six acres of land.' This was speaking to the point; he knew his men; he knew to what he had brought them; that the old cries of glory and liberty had lost their force.

'Antiquity (says M. Thiers) has bequeathed to the admiration of the world the passage of the Pyrenees and the Alps by Annibal, and it is certain that they have done nothing more grand, perhaps nothing so grand. The crossing of Saint Bernard, the transport of the army of Egypt through the English fleets, the preparations for the Expedition of Boulogne, finally the passage of the Danube at Wagram, are great operations which posterity will not admire less.'

There is little to admire in the abortive preparations at Boulogne, and the transport of the army of Egypt was simply remarkable for audacity. Nelson overshot the French squadron during the night before Crete, and preceded it by a few hours at Alexandria, whence he set sail in search of it towards Syria. 'Marvellous good luck, that fortune often withholds from the best combined plans, which was then lavished with a boundless liberality, as if the better to hide the snare to which her favours were subsequently to lure.' As usual, Bonaparte tried to enlist the people on his side by promising to relieve them from their oppressors, the Mamelukes; and, to deceive them the more easily, he did not hesitate to proclaim himself and army apostates from Christianity:—

'We, too, are true Mussulmans. Are we not the men who have destroyed the Pope, who said that it was necessary to

wage war with Mussulmans? Are we not the men who have destroyed the Knights of Malta, because these insensates believed that God willed them to wage war with Mussulmans? Thrice happy those who shall be with us! They will prosper in their fortune and their rank. Happy those who shall be neuter: they will have time to get acquainted with us, and will end by siding with us. But woe, three times woe, to those who shall take arms for the Mamelukes and fight against us. There will be no hope for them: they will perish.'

This resembles De Bracy's argument in Front de Bœuf's castle, when the monk asks whether he is safe and in Christian keeping. 'Safe thou art; and, for Christianity, here is the stout Baron Reginald de Bœuf, whose utter abomination is a Jew; and the good Knight Templar, Brian de Bois-Guilbert, whose trade is to slay Saracens. If these are not good marks of Christianity, I know no other that they bear about them.' These proclamations were utter failures. They were met by laughter or contempt; and Sir Sidney Smith was much more successful when he called on the Turks to trust to the word of a Christian knight rather than to that of a renegade without faith or honour.

The Mamelukes sustained a murderous defeat at the battle of the Pyramids. They lost two thousand men, of whom a large proportion were pushed into the Nile and drowned. They carried all their wealth about them, and M. Lanfrey says that there was hardly one of them on whom was found less than five or six hundred louis in gold—an obvious exaggeration, looking solely to the weight. But their spoils were rich enough to be worth securing, and the French soldiers set to work ingeniously enough to recover the drowned bodies, by bending their bayonets, tying them to a line, and so making use of them as hooks. It is stated in the Memoirs that the soldiers passed several days in fishing for Mamelukes, and that 'from that time forth they began to get reconciled to Egypt.' If we accept M.

Lanfrey's valuation, any one of them who had the luck to land a Mameluke might consider the promise of six acres on his return as practically fulfilled.

The destruction of the French fleet at Aboukir, falsely and ungenerously attributed to Brueys, whilst exercising a marked depression on the army, was accepted by the General as a possible favour of destiny under the guise of a blow. 'If the English,' he wrote to Kleber, 'relieve this squadron by another, they will haply oblige us to do greater things than we intended.' Wild as it may be thought, his dream was to emulate or surpass Alexander the Great. Again and again in after life did he repeat that, 'if Acre had fallen, he should have changed the face of the world, he should have been Emperor of all the East'—that 'a grain of sand had upset all his projects.' But what sort of projects are those that a grain of sand can upset? When the turn of events was in his favour, he assumed all the credit of combination and contrivance. Whenever anything went wrong, it was all owing to the stupidity of others, or ill luck. Not a single obstacle to his projects, or supposed projects, in Egypt occurred from one end of the expedition to the other, that might not have been foreseen from the commencement. He had miscalculated the resources of the country, the feelings of the population, the nature of the resistance to be overcome. To talk of Acre as a grain of sand was preposterous. The siege lasted sixty days, in the course of which there were fourteen assaults and twenty-six sorties. The French lost more than four thousand men, including several of their best officers; and other Acres were in store for them before they could approximate to the goal which a heated brain, rather than strategic genius or well-conceived policy, had marked out.

This most mendacious of heroes was never more splendidly mendacious than in covering his retreat on

this occasion, so far as words could cover it. In his bulletins, his letters, his formal reports, his proclamations to the army, which was retracing its steps with diminished numbers and long trains of sick and wounded, he declared that he retreated from the plague, not the enemy, that he 'had razed the palace of Djezzar to the ground, ruined the fortifications, burnt the town, in which no stone on stone remained.' The advance guard was ordered to leave Turkish standards in the villages as tokens of victory; the simultaneous orders to the rear-guard under Kleber being to burn, kill, destroy, pillage—to leave nothing behind them but a desert:—

> 'And the sole joy his baffled spirit knows,
> In this forced flight, is murd'ring as he goes.'

The want of transport for the sick and wounded was such that he dismounted all his cavalry except the rear-guard, and set the example to his officers of giving up all his own horses. The groom who came to ask him what horse he reserved for himself, provoked a smart stroke from his riding-whip: 'Everybody on foot! Have you not heard the order.'[1]

On his return to Alexandria he found a Turkish army intrenched at Aboukir. This he attacked and routed, and directly afterwards received through Sir Sidney Smith an intercepted packet of newspapers addressed to him. Not a single despatch from the Directory had reached him for ten months, and only one private letter, a letter from his brother Joseph pressing his return. 'He passed the night in devouring the Gazettes. He there read the sad history of our reverses—Italy lost, France threatened; but what he there saw, above all, was the Directory discredited and tottering, at daggers drawn with an Assembly which

[1] Ségur draws a striking picture of Napoleon on the retreat from Russia, walking, leaning on his cane, in the midst of his hurried and disordered troops.

was taking revenge for past humiliations. Since the receipt of Joseph's letter he had nourished the project of leaving Egypt; the battle of Aboukir allowed him to act upon it, for he could depart after such a success!' This explains the singular expression which had struck Murat before the battle: 'Here is about to be decided the fate of the world.' So far as the fate of the world was involved in his career, it had been decided a great many times already, and remained to be decided a great many times more—as when he again narrowly escaped the English cruisers.

He carried with him the *élite* of the surviving officers, Lannes, Murat, Berthier, Marmont, Andréossy, Duroc, Bessières, Lavalette—to say nothing of the *savants*, whom he meant to turn to good account, Monge, Berthollet, Denon, &c. He left the command to Kleber, who had all along disapproved the expedition, and being in no humour to adopt the responsibility when all hope of deriving honour from it was at an end, instantly addressed a letter to the Directory, in which its Quixotic character was thoroughly laid bare. This letter was intercepted by the English, and only reached France to be delivered to the First Consul. 'Fortune, which had transformed the accused into the judge, had thenceforth prepared their respective rewards for each of them: for one the dagger of a fanatic; for the other the first throne of the world!'

When we find that almost everything had fallen out during his absence as he had wished and anticipated, that his successor in the Italian command had shown accumulated proofs of incapacity, that the decline of national glory had served to enhance *his*, that the state of parties and public opinion had ripened to the precise point indicated by him as essential to his plans—we cannot set down all to fortune: we must allow something for the instincts of coming greatness, for intuitive insight into men and events, for political as well as military

coup-d'œil, for the faculty of reading signs in the social and moral atmosphere which was thought to be possessed in so eminent a degree by Talleyrand.

It was currently believed that the Egyptian expedition had been set on foot by the Directors out of jealousy or fear, to get rid of Bonaparte, who consequently escaped any blame that may have been incurred by its imprudence, whilst everything dazzling about it—everything calculated to excite popular admiration—was monopolized for him by the crowd. At Fréjus, where he landed, he was received with acclamations, and on the evening which he passed at Lyons a piece, entitled 'Le Retour du Héros,' was improvised for the occasion. At Paris he had only to choose his party, or rather his instruments; and, after due deliberation, he resolved on making Siéyès (then first Director) his stepping-stone, although holding this celebrated constitution-monger in the most sovereign contempt as an idealist and a pedant. The dislike was reciprocal. It could not well fail to be so, for their aims were similar, whilst their characters were diametrically opposed, and neither felt disposed to concede the first place. At a dinner where they met, Bonaparte, not having taken the slightest notice of Siéyès, and affecting to be ignorant of his presence, Siéyès angrily murmured to a friend: 'Do you see the behaviour of this insolent little fellow towards the member of a governing body which ought to have had him shot?' As M. Lanfrey observes, the difficulty was not to surmount their common repugnance, but to conciliate their ambition.

The Executive Government consisted of five Directors: Siéyès, Roger Ducos, Parras, Gohier, and De Moulins. Ducos was a creature of Siéyès, who also commanded a majority in the Conseil des Anciens. The plan was to remove the legislative bodies (les Anciens and the Cinq-Cents) to St. Cloud, where, secure from popular control, the Anciens were to issue a

decree naming Bonaparte commandant of all the military forces of Paris, including the National Guards, and supersede the Directors by a Provisional Consulate, composed of Bonaparte, Siéyès, and Ducos. Bonaparte found no difficulty in securing the adhesion of all the military men of mark, including Moreau, who preferred being a blind instrument and refused to listen to the plan, saying that he, too, was tired of the yoke of the advocates. To him was consequently assigned the most compromising part of all, the forcible occupation of the Luxembourg, *i. e.* an act that, happen what might, could be construed into nothing less than open revolt against the Constitution. His criminal and weak connivance weighed on him during the whole remainder of his life.

For a time all went smoothly enough, but the Cinq-Cents proved unmanageable, the Ancients wavered, and the affair assumed so awkward an appearance for the First Consul in embryo, that Augereau addressed him with bitter irony, *Te voilà dans une jolie position.* He cut a bad figure before the Anciens, where, though the majority was favourable to him and bullying language miserably misplaced, he broke forth in this fashion: 'If an orator, paid by the foreigner, were to speak of outlawing me, let him beware lest such a judgment be turned against him. If he were to speak of outlawing me, I should appeal to you, my brave companions in arms, to you, grenadiers, to you, soldiers, whose caps and bayonets I have in view. Remember that I march accompanied by the god of fortune and the god of war.' Nothing more to the purpose could be extracted from him, and the moral drawn by M. Lanfrey is that he had really nothing to urge in justification of the movement that would hold water. He had no public object in view; he meant to raise himself on the bayonets of his grenadiers, and he blurted out the truth.

The most trying scene was at the Cinq-Cents, which he entered with a guard. In a moment, the whole assembly were on their feet, storming with indignation:

'What is the meaning of this? Sabres in this place! Armed men! The boldest of the deputies rush from their seats, they surround Bonaparte, they push him back, they load him with invectives. "Out with him." "Outlaw the dictator." "What are you doing, rash man? You are violating the sanctuary of the laws," exclaimed Bigonnet. And Destrem, walking up to him, "Is it for this that thou hast conquered?" Others seize him by the collar and shake him violently, whilst reproaching him with his treason. Having come to intimidate, the General turns pale: he falls fainting into the arms of his grenadiers, who carry him out of the hall.'

Napoleon stated that daggers had been raised against him, and a grenadier was rewarded with a diamond ring and a kiss by Josephine for receiving in his sleeve the stab intended for the heart of her lord; but no one of the numerous eyewitnesses could be found to verify the statement.[1]

All now depended on Lucien, the President of the Cinq-Cents, who was fortunately equal to the occasion when Napoleon was not. After a fruitless attempt to oppose a decree of outlawry against his brother, he refused to put it to the vote, and deposited upon the tribune the ensigns of his authority, during the reiterated cry of '*Hors la loi!*'—that terrible cry that struck down Robespierre. It was heard outside by the group, in which stood Bonaparte, and they turned pale. Siéyès, who alone had preserved an imperturbable sang-froid through the critical turns of this day, coolly remarked: 'Since they are putting you out of the law,

[1] 'Thomas Thomé, grenadier of the Corps Législatif, who had his sleeve torn in warding off the stab of a dagger aimed at Bonaparte, has dined the 20th, and breakfasted the 21st, with the General. *La Citoyenne Bonaparte a embrassé* Thomas Thomé, and placed a diamond, worth two thousand crowns, on his finger.'—(*Moniteur*, 23rd Brumaire.)

it is they who are within it:' about as comforting a speech as Augereau's. Napoleon sent a party of grenadiers to bring off Lucien, and was about to clear the hall by force, when the soldiers, who had served as guard to the Assembly, hesitated, till Lucien, known to them as President, got on horseback, and made them an harangue, in which he pictured the Cinq-Cents overborne by representatives with daggers, by brigands in English pay, and only waiting to be delivered from 'this minority of assassins.' Then, taking a sword and turning it against his brother: 'As for me, I swear to pierce the heart of my own brother, if he ever infringes the liberty of Frenchmen.' This rodomontade succeeded; they raised a cry of '*Vive Bonaparte!*' and a party of them, led by Murat, entered the hall with drums beating, cleared it, and closed the doors.

In the course of the evening, Lucien re-assembled about thirty members of the Cinq-Cents, and passed in their name the decrees required for establishing the Consulate, and giving formal effect to this *coup-d'état*, which led by easy and obvious gradations to the First Empire, much as the *coup-d'état* of December, 1851, led to the Second. All enterprises of this kind are essentially alike. *Ce n'est que le premier pas qui coûte.* Bonaparte's foot was now on the first step of the range by which he was to ascend the throne. The member of the family (Lucien) who placed it there, was the one who derived least advantage from their rise; as he was also the one who persevered in maintaining a certain self-respect and independence of spirit till the last.

The founder of the dynasty has been accused of wanting personal courage, as well as presence of mind, on this day; and he undeniably shrank from clamour and violence as he would not have shrunk before a column or a battery. That he invariably displayed the very highest order of bravery in action, is beyond dispute. But what is commonly understood by per-

sonal courage depends much on habit and does not necessarily imply moral or civil courage. It may be proof against powder or steel, without being proof against a blow. That 'chastity of honour which feels a stain like a wound' is found in men who have no other quality of chivalry. Thus, it is no imputation on the proved bravery of James II. that, when rudely pulled and pushed about by the fishermen of Sheppey, his behaviour gave signs of pusillanimity. It is no reflection on Bonaparte that, when hustled and shaken by the collar in the Cinq-Cents, his nerves proved unequal to the emergency; that he quailed more from elevated self-esteem than fear.[1]

In the Constitution drawn up by Siéyès, the post of Grand-Elector, intended for Bonaparte, was contemptuously suppressed, and received its death-blow from a *mot*: 'How could you imagine,' said he, addressing the mortified legislator, 'that a man of some talent and a little honour would consent to play the part of a pig put up to fatten on so many millions?'[2] He meant

[1] Immediately before leaving Fontainebleau for Elba, he gave strong expression to his fear of personal violence on the way: 'Let the Bourbons have me assassinated, I forgive them; but I shall perhaps be abandoned to the outrages of this abominable population of the South. To die on the field of battle is nothing, but in the mud and by such hands!' His fears were justified by the result, for he ran great risk of being torn to pieces. Sir Neil Campbell, the English Commissioner, who accompanied him, says: 'Upon every occasion he evinced, by the finesse to which he had recourse, much anxiety to save his life whenever he considered it in danger.' After leaving Orange, 'he quitted his carriage, mounted one of the horses, and dressed in a plain great-coat, wearing too a Russian cloak and a common round hat with a white cockade, rode on in advance of the carriages, accompanied only by a courier.' During the remainder of the journey he changed caps and coats with the Commissioners, and assumed alternately the names of Colonel Campbell and Lord Burghersh.—(*Napoleon at Fontainebleau and Elba*, &c. By the late Major-General Sir Neil Campbell, C.B., British Commissioner, &c. &c., with a *Memoir*, &c., by his Nephew, Archibald Neil Campbell Maclachlan, M.A., &c., 1869.) M. Thiers says, 'the Commissioners *obliged* him to put on a foreign uniform that he might pass for one of the officers of the retinue.'

[2] 'D'un cochon à l'engrais de quelques millions.' This *mot* has been

from the first to take the lion's share, and he took it. The Constitution, as remodelled under his instructions, practically concentrated the whole power, civil and military, legislative and executive, in the First Consul, *i. e.* himself.

When an exile he regretted that he had not been more moderate, and M. Thiers remarks that, 'restricted in the employment of his faculties, he would undoubtedly not have accomplished such great things, and neither would he have attempted such extravagant ones, and probably his sceptre and his sword would have remained to his death in his glorious hands.' The probability is that he would not have held the sceptre, and would have been materially restricted in the use of the sword. M. Thiers has elsewhere said of him:

'Always and in all things he went straight, and without turning, to the point. Was it an affair of reasoning, he found the peremptory argument on the instant; was it a battle, he hit upon the decisive manœuvre. In him, to conceive, will, execute, were a single indivisible act, of an incredible rapidity, so that between the action and the thought, there was not an instant lost for reflection or resolve. To oppose to a genius thus constituted a moderate objection, a resistance of lukewarmness, of feebleness, or of ill-will, was to make him spring like the torrent which boils up and covers you with its foam, if you oppose to it an unexpected obstacle.'

How could a genius thus constituted have been subjected to constitutional restraints, without neutralising his energies? He would have resembled Gulliver tied down by a multiplicity of threads. Cramp your great man and he ceases to be great. Break up your Hannibal—*expende Hannibalem*—and he is no longer Hannibal. A hero can no more be two people than

omitted and paraphrased by M. Thiers, though recorded, as dictated at St. Helena, by both Gourgaud and Las Casas. Lord Russell mentions three other remarkable instances in which the same animal has supplied the metaphor.

he can be in two places at once. Alexander, Cæsar, Peter, Frederic, Napoleon—not one of these would have attained the same giddy height without being absolute. Napoleon could not even have undertaken the campaign of Marengo, had he abided by the principles of the new Constitution, which forbade the First Consul to command an army in the field. But no provision forbade his being present. Whilst, therefore, he in point of fact commanded the army, his Chief of the Staff, Berthier, held the title of General-in-Chief.

It so happens that all his prominent merits and defects as a commander are placed in broad relief by this campaign, which also teems with proofs that his successes and victories, in the earlier stages of his career, were quite as much owing to fortune or accident as his subsequent failures and defeats. The conception was bold, but hazardous. The notion of (what M. Thiers calls) enveloping the Austrians with an inferior force, was like that of the Irishman, who, single-handed, took four prisoners by surrounding them; and it is preposterous to call the passage of the Alps a prodigy greater than that of Hannibal, whose elephants were as difficult to get over as artillery, who was operating in an unknown country, cut off from all communication with his own, and with none of the appliances of modern warfare at his disposal. The little fort of Bard might have proved another grain of sand, like Acre, had it been held by another Sir Sidney Smith.

Bonaparte has been described, shortly before his departure, stretched at full length upon his maps and suddenly exclaiming to his astonished secretary, 'That poor M. de Melas will pass by Turin, will turn back towards Alexandria . . . I shall cross the Po, I shall overtake him in the road to Piacenza, in the plains of the Scrivia, and I shall beat him there, there,' placing one of his coloured pins on San Giulano. 'We shall

presently (adds M. Thiers) appreciate how extraordinary this kind of vision of the future was.' Extraordinary, indeed, for no one decisive event came to pass as intended or designed. On the 13th June, when the Austrian army under Melas (about 40,000 strong) was concentrated in Alexandria and resolved on risking a battle on the 14th, Bonaparte believed that they were on their retreat towards Genoa, and despatched Desaix to intercept them at Novi. Leaving another portion of his army at Marengo under Lannes, he was on his way to his quarters-general at Voghera, when he was stopped by the overflow of a river and compelled to pass the night at Torre-di-Garofolo. But for this accidental circumstance he could not have reached the scene of action till too late.

At break of day the Austrian attack began, and although the French, partially protected by a deep rivulet in their front, offered a stubborn resistance, they were falling back in confusion, when Bonaparte, 'blessing the opportune overflow of the Scrivia, came upon the ground. It was then ten o'clock. With the Consular Guard that he brought with him, and by a series of admirable dispositions, he temporarily restored the battle; but the advantage of numbers was too much for him, and defeat seemed again inevitable, when (about three in the afternoon) he was rejoined by Desaix, who, finding no traces of the Austrians towards Novi, and hearing the sustained cannonade at Marengo, had hurried back on his own personal responsibility. He brought with him 6000 fresh troops, and his first words are reported to have been, 'The battle is lost; but there is time to win another.' He fell leading the first charge, and the onward course of his division was arrested by a column of Austrian grenadiers, who were carrying all before them like the English brigade at Fontenoy, when they were charged in flank by the heavy dragoons of Kellermann, broken,

and cut down. The credit of this charge, which decided the day, was always claimed by Kellermann as an inspiration of his own. He was wont to account by it for subsequent neglect, saying that it was too great a service to be recognised. Thiers says that the charge was ordered at the suggestion of Desaix; and as Desaix was dead, there could be no risk in assigning to him any amount of glory not incompatible with the glory of the chief:—

'Happy inspiration of a lieutenant (exclaims M. Thiers), as intelligent as devoted! Happy fortune of youth! If, fifteen years later, the First Consul, now so well seconded by his generals, had found a Desaix on the battlefield of Waterloo, *he* would have preserved the empire and France its ruling position amongst the powers of Europe.'

Give the sentence a turn. If the First Consul had not found both a Desaix and a Kellermann on the battlefield of Marengo, he would never have founded an empire to be preserved, and France might have obtained long ago the position, for which she is still struggling, of a free as well as great nation.[1]

The amount of sacrifice and suffering imposed on others in order to obtain this victory is not the least remarkable or characteristic circumstance connected with it. When the operations commenced, Massena, with the army of Liguria (15,000 strong), was blockaded in Genoa. Though reduced to the verge of starvation, he held out in the hope of being relieved by the First Consul, and by so doing prevented the besieging force from uniting with the army of Melas.[2] A change of plan would have enabled Bonaparte to raise the siege, 'but (says M. Thiers) it was decided that the noble and unhappy army of Liguria should

[1] Bonaparte did all in his power to mystify the battle of Marengo. After writing three varying and false accounts, he caused all the original documents to be destroyed.

[2] Suppose Bazaine had held out like Massena?

pay to the end with its blood, with its sufferings, and finally by a painful surrender, the triumph of the army of reserve.'

Moreau, who commanded the army of the Rhine, had submitted his proposed plan of operations to the First Consul, whose assent was extorted by a threat of resignation. Moreau's military reputation was then hardly inferior to his own, and he did not hesitate to flatter the rival he could not yet venture to destroy. In a letter, carried by Moreau's chief of the staff, he writes:

'This officer will tell you that no one is more interested in your personal glory and happiness. I am now a kind of mannequin who has lost his liberty and happiness. Grandeur is a fine thing, but in memory and in imagination I envy your happiness: you are about to perform fine actions with brave men. I *would willingly exchange my Consular purple for the epaulettes of a chief of brigade under your orders.*'

At the same time he delayed the army of the Rhine by diverting the supplies required for it to the use of his own, the army of reserve; and stipulated that this army should, in a given emergency, be strengthened by a large detachment (20,000 men) of Moreau's. Moreau's campaign was eminently successful: he was in a career of victory which would speedily have placed the Austrian capital, if not the Austrian monarchy, at his mercy, when the detachment was demanded. His movements were paralysed that Bonaparte might enter with full effect upon the scene, might strike the grand blow and reap the honour, 'leaving to Massena the hardly enviable merit of an honourable but unsuccessful defence, to Moreau that of an abnegation for which no one gave him credit:'

'He was about to secure the price of *their* long labours, and he proposed to give such an *éclat* to the final surprise that the world should see only *him* in this success pre-

pared by *them*. Habituated to refer everything to self, it seemed to him quite natural to sacrifice his companions in arms to his own fortune, or solely to the desire of producing a greater effect on men's imaginations.'

The dazzling success of this campaign made him all-powerful. He usurped supreme authority in all things, in all branches of the administration, in all departments of the State, and within a wonderfully short space of time he had trampled upon or crushed out every form of liberty,—the liberty of the tribune, the liberty of the press, the liberty of the salon, dearer perhaps than any other liberty to the French. Intoxicated to giddiness by the height and suddenness of his elevation, he began to dream of universal empire, at least of empire like that of ancient Rome or Charlemagne; and his unrivalled military genius, with the vast resources of a great people at his unchecked disposal, speedily enabled him to subject the greater part of Europe to his will.

> 'Un conquérant, dans sa fortune altière,
> Se fit un jeu des sceptres et des lois,
> Et de ses pieds on peut voir la poussière
> Empreinte encore sur le bandeau des rois.'

From the admirable character of Alexander the Great drawn by Mr. Grote, it may be collected that the dominant motive, the life-long end and aim of 'Macedonia's madman,' was the love or lust of glory, the passionate wish to be recorded in song and history as the greatest warrior and conqueror the world e'er knew. He cared little or nothing for civilisation or colonisation, for diffusing the arts of Greece, for Hellenising Asia, or for leaving lasting and beneficent marks of his progress as he passed.[1] Bonaparte's ambition was of a more material and less romantic order. What he aimed at was power, dominion, sovereignty, absolutism; to dictate to kings and communities, to

[1] 'History of Greece,' vol. xii. p. 346, *seq.*

annihilate national independence and self-government, to be able to imitate Rienzi when (as described by Gibbon), brandishing his sword to the three parts of the world, he thrice repeated, 'And this too is mine!'

Bonaparte's peculiar fancy was not to proclaim himself the autocrat of the many realms obedient to his rule, but to be nominally the head of a federation of rulers. In one of Gilray's caricatures he was portrayed as a baker drawing a fresh batch of gingerbread kings and queens out of an oven: in another, as a showman pulling the wires of the crowned figures, who were dancing and attitudinising before him. Each hit told. The kings and princes of his creation were fragile as gingerbread and moveable as puppets. They would not have suited his purpose had they been otherwise. That the notion of permanence never entered his thoughts, is clear from the manner in which he threw down and shifted his puppets, or made them change places, at the first variation of policy or suggestion of caprice: as when he transferred Joseph from Naples to Spain, to be replaced in Naples by Murat; or when he erected a kingdom of Etruria, only to be suppressed; or made Louis king of Holland, as if for the fraternal gratification of dethroning him. Louis remonstrated in vain against the unwelcome dignity thrust upon him. It was (he wrote) equally disagreeable to 'this (the Dutch) free and estimable nation and himself.' Napoleon cut the matter short in a despatch to Talleyrand:

'I have seen M. Verhuell this evening. In two words, I have reduced the question to this. Holland is without an Executive and must have one. I will give her Prince Louis. Instead of the Grand Pensionary, there will be a King. . . . Before twenty days Prince Louis must make his entry into Amsterdam.'

Louis made his exit after an unsatisfactory trial, because he was too conscientious and tender-hearted for

the place. He was foolish enough to suppose—M. Thiers thinks it very foolish—that kings have duties as well as rights.

Perhaps the most nefarious of all Bonaparte's schemes of personal and family aggrandisement was that by which he entrapped the Spanish Bourbons, and laid violent hands on their persons and their throne. It comprises every variety of moral turpitude—treachery, falsehood, inhumanity, injustice—and the sole attempt at palliation turns out to be an impudent forgery, deliberately concocted by the perpetrator.[1] In Spain, he faithfully carried out each one of the maxims of kingcraft which he was fond of quoting from Corneille :—

> 'Le choix des actions ou mauvaises ou bonnes
> Ne fait qu'anéantir la force des couronnes :
> Le droit des rois consiste à ne rien épargner,
> La tenue d'équité détruit l'art de régner :
> Quand on craint d'être injuste on a toujours à craindre,
> Et qui osait tout pouvoir, doit oser tout enfreindre ;
> Fuir, comme un deshonneur, la vertu qui le perd,
> Et voler sans scrupule au crime qui le sert.'

Directly after the *guet-à-pens* of Bayonne, when the victims were safe in the toils, he wrote (May 10th) to Joseph :—

'It is to you I destine this crown. At Madrid, you are in France. Naples is the end of the world. I desire that immediately after the receipt of this letter, you leave the regency to whom you like, the command of the troops to Marshal Jourdan, and that you start for Bayonne. . . . You will receive this letter on the 19th, you will start on the 20th, and you will be here on the 1st of June.'

Joseph very much preferred 'the end of the world;' but there was nothing for it but to obey, and he resigned himself to the painful pageant prepared for him. Within six weeks after his translation he is writing to

[1] The letter to Murat, of March 29. The forgery is conclusively brought home to Bonaparte by M. Lanfrey (vol. iv. chap. vii).

complain that Spain has risen against him to a man. 'I have a nation of brave men, exasperated to the last point, for my enemies. My assassination is publicly spoken of.' . . . Then, in answer to some vague assertion of Napoleon: 'No, Sire, the honest men are no more for me than the rogues. You are mistaken: your glory will crumble away in Spain.' And there it did crumble away. There it was that his troops, confronted with British troops, lost the character and consciousness of being invincible. There he first came in contact with the genuine spirit of nationality, and found in it something elastic, irrepressible, unextinguishable; something which, like Milton's angels—

'Vital in every part,
Cannot, but by annihilating, die.'

The Correspondence contains letters to each of the puppet kings, ordering them not to spare their subjects, *e. g.*—

'*To Jerome Napoleon, King of Westphalia.*

'Paris, 4th January, 1808.

'If you begin by throwing these expenses on your treasury, you will ruin it. What will you do when the Grand Army passes through your territories? It has been quartered a year in Bavaria: it has not cost the King a sou: the inhabitants have supported it: *it is true, they have been a little pinched*, but if the King had been obliged to pay, he would not have been able to support it a fortnight.'

The dread of being dragged in triumph, of undergoing a personal humiliation if they resisted, is said to have so paralysed the kings of the ancient world that, at the bare approach of a Roman army, they trembled and hastened to make terms. Napoleon's treatment inspired similar terrors and produced similar effects. If modern manners saved the wives and daughters of captive or conquered princes from actual outrage, the force he put upon their feelings, habits, and affections

was cruel and ungenerous in the extreme. He was in all his tastes and instincts, in his inmost soul and to the very tips of his fingers, a *parvenu*. He coveted and envied birth and high connexions for their own sakes, as a *nouveau-riche* might covet and envy them; and, with all his inordinate self-esteem, he had not true pride enough to feel on an equality with princes unless he could be on terms of familiarity and intermarry with them. His first approaches were made to the petty princes of Germany, whose alliance could not augment his power and could only flatter a low vanity. He demanded the Princess Augusta of Bavaria, who was engaged to the eldest son of the Elector of Baden, for Eugene, and the daughter of the Elector of Würtemberg for Jerome. His first proposals were indignantly declined. But after Austerlitz, the parts are changed: what Napoleon solicited, he now exacts. He speaks no longer as an ally, but as a master:—

'The Princess Augusta, torn from her betrothed, is married to a man who was no more consulted than herself, and who knew nothing of her but her portrait on a china cup: this betrothed himself will be forcibly united to the Princess Stephanie de Beauharnais: to crown all, Jerome married at Baltimore, to a lady honourable and distinguished though without titles of nobility, who has already borne him a child, will be unmarried and remarried at a blow.'

We suspect that no disagreeable force was put upon the inclinations of Jerome, a low profligate, to whom Napoleon, whose habitual name for him was *petit polisson*, once said: 'Jerome, they say the majesty of kings is stamped on the brow; *you* may travel incognito till doomsday without being recognised.'

His own second marriage was an exaggerated mistake of the same order. It did not prevent Austria from joining the coalition. The proud House of Hapsburg always writhed under it as a *mésalliance*, and spoke of him, when they dared, much as George Dandin

was spoken of by the family into which he had thrust himself from the least excusable of all vanities. Bonaparte's autograph letters to sovereigns who would none of him—as to George III. and the Emperor of Austria, in 1799—were a foolish affectation of unattainable equality; for, be it remembered, these letters were not written in his representative capacity in the name of a great nation, as Cromwell would have written, but as brother to brother or friend to friend.

It is painful to think it or say it, but the truth, like murder, will out: Bonaparte was never, in the English sense of the word, a gentleman. He was wanting in the delicacy, generosity and refinement, in the self-control, self-respect and consideration for the feelings of others, implied in this complex and never translated —we believe untranslatable—term. He would never, like Louis Quatorze, have flung away his cane to avoid the temptation of making a dishonouring use of it. He would never, like the Emperor Nicholas at Buckingham Palace, have risen and hurried to open the door for a lady-in-waiting. What could be in more execrable taste than what we now know to have been his calculated attack on Lord Whitworth, which was pushed to such an extent of underbred violence that a shudder ran through the circle lest he should finish by a blow? 'What did you intend to do, if he had struck you?' was the question put to the English ambassador on his return. 'Draw my sword, and run him through the body,' was the reply.

Again, in the famous interview with Prince Metternich (June, 1813), a statesman who represented an emperor and had long guided the policy of an empire, he stormed and ranted and flung his hat on the ground, to be picked up by the Prince (which it was not), as if he was dealing with one of his menials who was bound to tolerate any amount of bullying. No wonder that the calm, dignified bearing of the high-bred statesman

put him out and added to his irritability. Amongst other coarse things, he said, 'I have three times restored the Emperor Francis his throne; I have even committed the blunder of marrying his daughter, hoping to attach him to me; but nothing has availed to bring him over to better sentiments.' Referring to the marriage a second time, he calls it 'a very great blunder on his part;' and M. Thiers naïvely remarks:

'This strange manner of treating, this contemptuous mode of mentioning a marriage, for which moreover he appeared in no respect sorry as a private man, offended and irritated M. de Metternich, without much imposing on him, for a cold firmness would have impressed him more.'

The reception of the Pope in 1804, whose attendance for his coronation was rather compelled than invited, is another instance. 'I will say nothing (writes Gonsalvi) of the humiliation heaped on Pius VII. Such narratives are revolting to my memory and my pen.' The commonest forms of politeness were not observed towards this venerable ecclesiastic, the spiritual head of the Catholic world. Politeness has been defined 'the art of rendering to others what is socially their due.' Savary complacently relates how it was ingeniously contrived that the first meeting between the Pope and the Emperor should take place on the road through the forest of Fontainebleau, where, on the approach of the Papal carriage, the Emperor presented himself in hunting costume, on horseback, with a pack of dogs. The carriage stopped: the road was muddy, and the Pope shrank from placing his foot, *chaussé de soie blanche*, on the ground; '*cependant, il fallut bien qu'il en vint là.*' Napoleon dismounted: they embraced, and the imperial carriage was purposely stopped a few paces in advance, with both doors open. The Emperor got in by the right door and took the place of honour, leaving the left to his guest; and this first step (adds

Savary) settled the etiquette, without negotiation, for the entire duration of the visit. The puerility of the proceeding is no less remarkable than the innate vulgarity which suggested it. Deference to a priest could imply no more than deference to a woman.[1]

The scandalous indignities to which Pius VII. was exposed in 1809 have been lucidly and forcibly detailed by M. d'Haussonville. The Holy Father's palace was broken open and his person arrested at dead of night. He was compelled to take a succession of long journeys whilst suffering under a painful complaint, and at the place of detention, Savona, finally assigned to him, he was subjected to a sort of *peine forte et dure* in the hope of bringing him to terms. Denial of fire in cold weather, with scanty supplies of clean linen, were amongst the means employed by the successor of Charlemagne to subdue the successor of Leo;[2] and, considering that the Concordat had been framed to conciliate the revived religion of the mass of the people, Bonaparte's treatment of the Pope, judged merely as a piece of statecraft, was one of the very worst blunders of his reign.

The influence of the lady who took charge of Bonaparte's social education at Valence, must have been little more than ephemeral, for his matured sentiments towards women seem utterly devoid of refinement and delicacy. No man with the slightest tincture of chivalry would have publicly applied to a woman and a queen, the language which he applied to the Queen of Prussia in his bulletins,[3] and his bearing towards her

[1] M. Thiers says that the meeting at Fontainebleau was arranged with a view to the comfort of his Holiness!

[2] 'For the Pope, I am Charlemagne, because, like Charlemagne, I unite the crown of France to that of the Lombards, and that my empire is bordered by the East.'—(Napoleon to Cardinal Fesch, 1806.)—Charlemagne went to Rome to be crowned by Leo III.

[3] In the 'Bulletin to the Grand Army,' of October 27, 1806, he more than insinuates that she had intrigued with the Emperor Alexander and acted under his influence:—'In the apartment occupied by the Queen

when they met at Tilsit smacked more of the barrack or guard-room than of the Court.

On the eve of the day when he was to deliver a speech in the Tribunat, Benjamin Constant came to Madame de Stäel and said, 'Your salon is filled with the society of your choice: it will be a desert to-morrow, if I speak. Think well of it.' 'Follow your conviction,' was her reply. The prediction was realised to the letter: all her invited and habitual guests stayed away, and Fouché sent for her to tell her that the First Consul suspected her of having excited Benjamin Constant, and advised her to go into the country—the conventional mode of ordering out of Paris. 'Such was the commencement of those vile persecutions against women, successively directed against Mesdames de Stäel, Recamier, d'Avaux, de Chevreuse, de Balbi, de Champcenetz, de Damas, and so many other persons, distinguished by their wit, their beauty, or their virtues.' We give a specimen :—

'*À M. Cambacères.*

'Osterode, March 20, 1807.

'My Cousin,—I have written to the Minister of the Police to send Madame de Stäel back to Geneva, leaving her free to go to any foreign country that she likes. This woman continues her trade of *intrigante*. She has been in the neighbourhood of Paris in defiance of my orders. She is a downright nuisance. It is my wish that you speak seriously to the Minister about her, for I shall find myself compelled to have her taken away by the police. Keep an eye on Benjamin Constant, and at the slightest meddling on his part, *I will send him to Brunswick to his wife's* (*chez sa femme*).'

What made this sort of persecution so terrible, was

at Potsdam was found the portrait of the Emperor of Russia, which he had presented to her . . . . . How unhappy are the princes who allow women to influence political affairs. The notes, the reports, the State papers, were scented, and found mixed with *chiffons* and other articles of the Queen's toilette.'

the long reach and unrelenting grasp of the persecutor. The Duc d'Enghien was carried off from a neutral territory, and the Comte de Provence (Louis XVIII.) narrowly escaped the same fate. An order to Maréchal Berthier, dated Saint Cloud, August 5, 1806, begins thus: 'My Cousin—I suppose you have arrested the booksellers of Augsburg and Nüremberg. My intention is that they be carried before a military tribunal and shot within twenty-four hours.' It was under this authority that Palm, a Bavarian subject, was shot.

In the course of the interview already mentioned, M. de Metternich said: 'Sire, I have just passed through your regiments: your soldiers are children. You have made levies by anticipation, and summoned into the field a scarcely formed generation. When this generation is destroyed by the war now pending, will you anticipate anew? will you call out one younger still?' It was then that the autocrat lost all self-command, and dashed his hat upon the ground, exclaiming: 'You are not a soldier: you have not the soul of one like me; you have not learned to despise the lives of others and your own. . . . What are two hundred thousand men to me?' Metternich saw his advantage. 'Fling open the doors and windows, Sire; let all Europe hear what you say, and the cause I come here to uphold will not lose by it.'

Just before, Napoleon had made another unconscious admission in justifying his refusal of peace: 'I am a soldier, I need honour, glory; I cannot appear diminished in the middle of my people: I must continue great, glorious, admired.' Then, to shade off the concentrated selfishness of his policy: 'I am no longer my own master. I belong to the brave nation that hastens to shed its most generous blood at my call. I must not reply to such devotion by personal calculations, by weakness: I must preserve for them entire the grandeur they have purchased by such heroic efforts.'

Although his calculations were purely personal, and his egotism unalloyed, it is not the less true that the brave nation had identified their glory with his, were still ready to fight on rather than surrender a particle of the grandeur he had purchased at their cost. And what a cost! It was not merely a population reduced and dwarfed by conscription to an extent that has left enduring traces in the race. The French mind suffered from the forced and cramping system like the body. The springs of intellect were dammed up or poisoned. While the imperial régime lasted, French genius resembled the prisoned eagle, which will not pair or propagate. Poetry and history were made to order, and eloquence was hermetically sealed; unless, indeed, adulatory addresses and bombastic bulletins in the vilest taste can be called eloquence. Its voice was heard no more after the expulsion of Benjamin Constant, Chenier, Guinguené, &c., from the Tribunat. He then pronounced the Tribunat to be *épuré*. 'Say *écrémé*,' retorted Madame de Stäel. He crushed literature at a blow:

'*To the Citoyen Regnier* (*Grand Judge.*)

'July 7, 1803.

'As there appears to exist a system of corrupting opinion by the press, I think it best for the Prefect of Police to write a circular to all the booksellers to forbid them to offer any work for sale until seven days after remitting you a copy.'

The newspapers were only just permitted to exist on sufferance:

'*To M. Fouché.*

'April 22, 1805.

'Put some restraint on the newspapers, make them insert good articles, give the editors of the "Débats" and the "Publiciste" warning that the time is not far off when, finding them no longer useful, I shall suppress them with all the others, and keep but one. . . . *that I will never permit newspapers to say or do anything contrary to my interests*:

that they may write some little articles in which they may infuse a little venom, but that some fine morning their mouths will be closed.'

It subsequently appears that the reason why they were to be allowed to infuse a little venom was, that in case foreign rulers should complain of libels, he might say they were beyond his control. Three other journals are warned that they will appear no more 'unless the proprietors provide writers and editors of morality and patriotism superior to all corruption.'

'*To M. Fouché.*

'Oct. 4, 1805.

'It strikes me that the journals do not animate the public spirit enough. Our journals are read everywhere, particularly in Hungary. Make them write articles telling the Germans and Hungarians how they are the dupes of English intrigues: that the Emperor of Germany sells the blood of his subjects for gold. . . . The spirit of the journals must be directed in this sense—to attack England in her fashions, her usages, her literature, her constitution.'

After May, 1805, the 'Débats' is only permitted to exist on condition of being revised by a censor,—*un homme sûr et attaché*—who is to be paid 12,000 francs a year by the proprietors. The Emperor then writes to Fouché: 'This is the arrangement I approve for the Journal de l'Empire *ci-devant* Journal des Débats. When this arrangement is complete, you will make a similar one with the Publiciste and the Gazette de France.

'Paris, March 6, 1806.

'MONSIEUR TALLEYRAND,—It is my intention that the political articles of the "Moniteur" be composed *par les relations extérieures*, and when I have seen how they are composed for a month, I shall forbid other journals to deal with politics otherwise than by copying the articles of the "Moniteur."'

'*To M. Fouché.*

'Feb. 7, 1806.

'M. Portalis has notified to me the existence of several ecclesiastical journals and the inconveniences which may result from the spirit in which they are conducted, and (*above all*) *from the diversity of opinions on matters of religion.* My intention, consequently, is that the religious journals cease to appear, and that they be united in a single journal, which shall take charge of all the subscribers (*abonnés*). As this journal is to be specially devoted to the instruction of ecclesiastics, it will be called "Journal des Curés." The conductors (*redacteurs*) will be named by the Cardinal Archbishop of Paris.'

This certainly was one most effective way of checking the controversial spirit of the clergy, which they are in the habit of indulging with little regard to the real interests of religion or the Church.

In November, 1806, he writes from Berlin to order a continuation of Millot's 'Elements of French History' in a proper spirit, and directly afterwards comes a letter to Cambacères :—

'If the army strives to do honour to the nation as much as possible, it must be owned that the men of letters do all they can to dishonour it. I read yesterday the bad verses sung at the opera. Why do you suffer them to sing impromptus at the opera? This is only proper at the Vaudeville. *People complain that we have no literature: this is the fault of the Minister of the Interior.*'

This is quite in the tone of Mummius at Corinth. The fact is, his head was completely turned after Austerlitz,—

'Assumes the god,
Affects to nod,
And seems to shake the spheres.'

The interviews at Tilsit shew to what extent the balance of his mind had been destroyed by habitual falsehood, by the absence of any fixed standard of right and wrong, and by the blind confidence engen-

dered by success. He was throughout deceiving himself instead of Alexander, who reaped all the substantial benefits of the treaty, and gave nothing in return but promises, which were (as they were sure to be) broken or nullified by events. All was delusion, nought was truth. In this respect (as M. Lanfrey observes) he would be disadvantageously contrasted with Frederic, who, coolly analysing the motives of his own policy, attributed it to ambition, interest, and the desire of being talked about. Nor do the last days of the Exile of St. Helena, even in the luminous pages of M. Thiers, present anything equal to the 'sublime quarter of an hour' of the dying Augustus, when he smilingly asked his friends whether he had played the drama of life well. Bonaparte had utterly lost (if he ever possessed) the faculty of self-examination. Nothing, he persistently maintained, that he had ever thought or done, was wrong in motive or in act. If his life was to live over again, he would live (with rare exception) as he had lived it. He should appear (he boasted) before his Maker without a fear. He passed most of his time in putting the best face on the inculpated passages of his reign, in falsifying history, in draping his own figure for posterity. He was rapt up in his fame, like the beautiful Lady Coventry in her beauty: who took to her bed when she found it going, and died with a looking-glass in her hand. Plain truth to him was like woollen to Pope's coquette:

> '"Odious in woollen! 'twould a saint provoke"
> (Were the last words that poor Narcissa spoke):
> "No, let a charming chintz and Brussels lace
> Wrap my cold limbs, and shade my lifeless face;
> One would not sure be frightful when one's dead;—
> And—Betty—give this cheek a little red."'

For 'Betty' read Las Casas or Montholon, and the parallel is complete.

In April, 1806, he wrote to Prince Eugene:—

'I am not in the habit of looking for my political opinions

in the advice of others, and my people of Italy who know me ought not to forget I have more knowledge of affairs in my little finger than they in all their heads put together. And when at Paris, where there is more enlightenment than in Italy, people are silent and do homage to the opinion of a man who has proved that he saw farther and better than others, I am astonished that they have not the same condescension in Italy.'

Fatuity had reached its acme when he could delude himself into the belief that the servile obedience he commanded was the willing tribute to his sagacity. The effect of this overweening self-sufficiency, combined with his astounding energy and activity, was to allow no independent field of action or development to any high order of talent or capacity, civil or military. Zeal, readiness, bravery, with intelligence enough to obey orders, were the sole qualifications in request. He demanded unscrupulous instruments—not honest or wise advisers—and woe to the statesman who insinuated a caution, the administrator who remonstrated against an oppressive impost, the commander who revolted against cruelty, or the diplomatist who hesitated at a lie. The race of civil functionaries were stunted in their growth morally and intellectually, like the rank and file of the army physically: each department of the State was depressed to a dead level of mediocrity. The eminent jurists to whom the completion of the Code was intrusted, would have done far better without his intervention. M. Lanfrey shews that, to give him the credit of having planned or initiated this work, is altogether a mistake; and that his administrative reforms were marked neither by originality nor stability. A single article of his Decree of March, 1812, will serve to show the spirit of his commercial legislation:

'Art. 3. It is forbidden to all our subjects, of whatever quality or condition, to make purchases or provision of grain

or flour, to keep, store, or make them a subject of speculation.'

Military genius was never allowed fair play at any epoch of his career. The most promising generals, the possible competitors for fame, were treated like Massena and Moreau,—

> 'And all the budding honours on thy crest
> I'll crop to make a garland for my head.'

Bonaparte's invariable practice was to concentrate all his best troops in the army which he commanded in person, and to send his generals on expeditions for which their resources were notoriously inadequate. If a movement or manœuvre ordered by him failed, he as invariably denied the order, or asserted that it was not executed in the proper spirit or as he intended it. Thus the disaster at Kulm was imputed to Vandamme, and the collapse at Waterloo to Ney and Grouchy. Knowing literally nothing of naval matters, foolishly imagining that the tactics for fleets and armies were the same, he compelled Villeneuve to put to sea and encounter certain destruction at Trafalgar. When the admiral—a man of proved skill and courage—pointed out the inevitable results of leaving Cadiz, his pitiless master writes, 'Villeneuve is a wretch who should be ignominiously dismissed. Without combination, without courage, without public spirit, he would sacrifice everything, provided he could save his skin. Let my squadron set sail: let nothing stop it! it is my will that my squadron does not remain at Cadiz.'

It left Cadiz accordingly, and within fifteen days it was no more. His first exclamation on hearing the event was: 'I cannot be everywhere!' another astounding instance of fatuity. The entire responsibility was flung upon the unhappy admiral—who had gallantly done his duty—in terms that drove him to suicide. The morning after the receipt of a despatch from the Minister of Marine, he was found lifeless, with six stabs from a knife in the

region of the heart. The fragment of a letter to his wife ends thus: 'What happiness that I have no child to receive my horrible inheritance, and be loaded with the weight of my name! Ah, I was not born for such a lot: I have not sought it: I have been dragged into it in my own despite. Adieu, adieu. . . .'

Such things make the blood boil, and they abound in the annals of this crowned scoundrel (*scélérat couronné*) as M. Lanfrey, hurried away by just indignation, designates him. How many broken hearts, how many desolated homes, how many blighted careers, how many ruined reputations, have gone to make this man the world's wonder! What torrents of blood and tears have been shed to float his name on the flood-tide of immortality,—

'Linked with one virtue and a thousand crimes.'

But that one virtue was military genius, and because it brought military grandeur to the French, they were, and are, proud of him, nay, proud of the laurelled and gilded chains he riveted on them, though the laurels have faded, and the gilding is rubbed off.

An English traveller, stopping at a French hotel before the Revolution, came upon a Frenchman mercilessly horsewhipping his valet in the corridor, and after rescuing the man, told him that he ought to take legal proceedings for the assault. He drew himself up and replied: 'I would have you know, sir, that my master is too great a man for that. He could have a *lettre-de-cachet* for the asking.' 'Confound the fellow!' exclaimed the traveller; 'he was proud of having a master who could treat him like a dog.' Had not the collective nation something of the same feeling? Were they not proud of a master who could treat them like dogs, who could make them crouch at his feet when he was not hounding them on to their prey? Do they not occasionally cast a longing lingering look

behind at the dearly-bought grandeur that has passed away? There are signs that he who runs may read. Their recently revived call for free institutions is owing far less to the love of liberty than to the loss of military prestige. Personal government, rudely shaken by the Mexican expedition, received its death-blow at Sadowa, which threw Magenta and Solferino into the shade. France is kept awake by thinking of the trophies of Prussia, and cannot rest under the thought that she is no longer indisputably the first military nation in the world. If the Continent is to be again turned into one huge battlefield, it will be to satisfy this fantastic point of honour.[1]

By way of striking a congenial chord, the founder of the Second Empire, whose head is never turned like his uncle's, wrote thus :—

'Palace of the Tuileries, April 12. 1869.

'MONSIEUR LE MINISTRE,—On the 15th of August next a hundred years will have elapsed since the Emperor Napoleon was born. During that long period many ruins have been accumulated, but the grand figure of Napoleon has remained, upstanding. It is that which still guides and protects us—it is that which, out of nothing, has made me what I am.

'To celebrate the centenary date of the birth of the man who called France the great nation, because he had developed in her those manly virtues which found empires, is for me a sacred duty, in which the entire country will desire to join. . . .

'My desire is that from the 15th of August next every soldier of the Republic and of the First Empire should receive an annual pension of 250 francs. . . .

'To awaken grand historical recollections, is to encourage faith in the future; and to do honour to the memory of great men is to recognise one of the most striking manifestations of the Divine will.'

[1] Four months after this was written, France declared war against Germany, for no intelligible cause except that her military or national honour was fancied to be at stake.

To what does the grand figure point? In what sense does it guide and protect? What are the manly virtues that found empires on cannon-balls and bayonets? How is it a pious duty to do honour to such manifestations of the Divine will?—

> 'If plagues or earthquakes break not Heaven's design,
> Why then a Borgia, or a Catiline?'

If we recognise the hand of Providence in these scourges of our race, are we also bound to praise, honour, and worship them? To do so would be to imitate the barbarians who select for their fondest adoration the fetish or idol they think most capable of working evil. This tendency of the human mind to form for itself malevolent and maleficent deities to be propitiated by blood and pain, has led an eminent writer and thinker to contend that natural religion has done more harm than good, has proved, in fact, little better than a curse. Whatever may be objected to his argument, we deem it quite conclusive against that popular faith, or superstition, which erects a temple to imperialism and places 'the grand figure' of Napoleon on the shrine.[1]

[1] Napoleon the Third has done his best to perpetuate this superstition, which is far from dying out. In his last will, after recommending his son, the Prince Imperial, to 'penetrate himself' with the writings of the prisoner of St. Helena, he says: 'You must reflect that, from the Heavens on high, those whom you have loved look down on you and protect you. It is the soul of my Great Uncle that has always inspired and sustained me. It will be the same with my son, for he will be always worthy of his name.' To apply a familiar distinction—if they are now looking at all, they are more likely to be looking *up* than *down*, although the confident expectation of the adoring nephew seemed to be that he should be seated in Heaven alongside of the Great Uncle, like The Son on the right hand of The Father.

VICISSITUDES OF FAMILIES: ENGLISH, SCOTCH, IRISH, AND CONTINENTAL NOBILITY.

(From the Quarterly Review for April, 1860.)

Vicissitudes of Families and other Essays. By Sir Bernard Burke, Ulster King of Arms, author of 'The Peerage.' Third edition. London, 1859.

Although the primary moral inculcated by this book may be familiar enough, the incidental trains of thought and inquiry suggested by it are by no means equally trite, and we incline to rank them amongst the most curious and important it is well possible to pursue. When we read of the rise and fall of illustrious houses, of the elevation and extinction of historic names, of the different sources and varying fortunes of nobility, we are insensibly led on to speculate on the political, social, and moral uses of the institution, on the nature and tendency of blood and race, on the genuine meaning and philosophy of what is called Birth, and on the comparative force of the distinction in the leading communities that have more or less adopted it. Is its influence increasing or on the wane? Is it a blessing or a curse to humanity? Should it be encouraged in old countries or discredited in new? Is it essential to constitutional monarchy? Is it incompatible with republican freedom? What have inherited honours and ancient lineage done for civilisation, for science and learning, for politeness and the fine arts? Or, admitting what can hardly be denied, that privileged classes have been eminently useful in certain stages of progress, has their vocation, like that of the monastic

orders in the dark ages, passed away, become a dead letter, or grown absolutely mischievous, since the discovery of representative assemblies and a free press? When, again, is or has been the pride of ancestry carried furthest, and where does it rest on the most solid foundation as regards either purity of lineage, public services, or popular esteem?

Looking at the number of family histories recently printed,[1] we feel we are no longer called upon to defend genealogical studies from the imputation of dulness, dryness, or barrenness. One thing, at least, may be confidently predicated concerning them. The sentiment, instinct, or prejudice on which they mainly rely, would seem to be implanted in mankind, and to be elicited and fostered instead of deadened by intellectual progress. We may trace its influence on the most thoughtful, self-relying, and comprehensive minds, including Bishop Watson, Franklin, Gibbon, and Burke. It is all very well to disclaim the 'avos, et proavos, et quæ non fecimus ipsi,' or to repeat complacently the

[1] One of the most remarkable, a handsome quarto of 400 pages, is entitled 'Stemmata Botevilliana: Memorials of the Families of de Boteville, Thynne, and Botfield. By Beriah Botfield. London, 1860.' In this work the founder of the noble family of Thynne is stated to be John de Boteville, or de Botefelet, who, *temp.* Edward IV., became popularly known successively as 'of the Inn,' 'th' Inn,' 'Thynn.'

Scotch family history has been enriched by 'The Stirlings of Keir, and their Family Papers. By William Fraser' (not published): and 'The Montgomeries Earls of Eglinton,' by the same learned and accurate writer. Sir George Stirling of Keir, the lineal ancestor of Sir William Stirling Maxwell, Bart., was the friend and companion in arms of the great Marquis of Montrose; and a Montgomery is said to have held high command under the Conqueror at Hastings. The multiplication of family histories is not confined to the Old World. Pedigree-hunting has become quite a mania in the United States, where it would seem that the best English blood, as well as the purest English accent, has been preserved. As one instance amongst many, we may cite 'The Brights of Suffolk, England: by J. B. Bright, of Boston'—a royal octavo of 345 pages. The English branches are described as extinct, and the author tacitly repudiates any relationship with the most distinguished bearer of the name, whose opinions might have been expected to endear him to his American cousins.

familiar couplet in which 'Howards' rhymes to 'cowards,' or to congratulate a millionaire, whether he relishes the compliment or not, on his being the architect of his own fortune. The odds are that he is already in treaty with the Heralds' College for a coat-of-arms, and looking about for proofs of his descent paternally or maternally from some extinct family in the class of gentry.

Nor should we be disposed to set down this tendency as altogether a sign of weakness or poverty of mind, when we find Byron prouder of his pedigree than of his poems, and the author of 'Waverley' risking absolute ruin in the hope of being the founder of a new line of lairds. Yet how tottering and precarious, in the great majority of instances, are these ideal edifices! how misplaced the ambition, how illusory the hope! Newstead has been in the market twice within living memory; and the Scotts of Abbotsford, in the true feudal acceptation of the term, exist no longer. Their fate is far from singular. Indeed, it is quite startling, on going over the beadroll of English worthies, to find how few are directly represented in the male line. Chaucer, Spenser, Shakespeare, Raleigh, Sidney, Dryden, Pope, Swift, Addison, Bacon, Coke, Hale, Holt, Locke, Milton, Newton, Cromwell, Hampden, Blake, Marlborough, Peterborough, Nelson, Wolfe, Clarendon, Hume, Gibbon, Johnson, Burke, Goldsmith, Pitt, Fox, are obvious instances, and the list might be indefinitely prolonged. As the most eminent have left no issue, the problem, how far female descent may be admitted to supply the failure of male, might safely be left unsolved. But much of what we are about to say would appear confused or unintelligible unless we came to a clear preliminary understanding as to the precise meaning of lineage, ancestry, and birth.

We submit, then, that the distinction itself—a purely conventional creation—cannot exist at all, except

within assigned limits; because, like Shakespeare's circle in the water, it is precisely of that quality which 'too much spreading will disperse to nought.' It is recorded of Mary Lady Honeywood, that, at her decease in her ninety-third year, she had 367 lawful descendants then living, 16 children, 114 grandchildren, 228 great grandchildren, and 9 great great grandchildren. But to show how rapidly blood becomes diffused through females, we have simply to refer to the number of persons who undoubtedly partake of the blood royal. These are now counted by tens of thousands; and (according to Sir Bernard Burke) amongst the descendants of Edmund of Woodstock, Earl of Kent, sixth son of Edward I., who died without male issue, were a butcher and a toll-gatherer, namely, Mr. Joseph Smart, of Hales Green, and Mr. George Wilmot, keeper of the turnpike-gate at Cooper's Bank, near Dudley. Amongst the descendants of Thomas Plantagenet, Duke of Gloucester, fifth son of Edward III., was Mr. Stephen James Penny, the late sexton at St. George's, Hanover Square, who christened his eldest son (we believe still living) Plantagenet.

A single mis-alliance, and the decline proceeds at a gallop. In 1637, the great great grandson of Margaret Plantagenet, daughter and heiress of George Duke of Clarence, was found exercising the cobbler's craft at Newport, in Shropshire. If this scion of royalty had married and left children, he might have stocked the whole country with Plantagenets. Bernard, Duke of Norfolk, of Brooks's and Beefsteak Club celebrity, once resolved to give a dinner to all the descendants of Jockey of Norfolk, Richard III.'s friend, and directed his steward to trace them out and make preparations accordingly. When a list, still incomplete but exceeding six hundred, was laid before him, he gave up the project. All the genuine Howards are entitled to quarter the royal arms in right of their descent from

Margaret de Mowbray (daughter of 'Jockey of Norfolk'), who married Sir John Howard, fifth in descent from Sir William, Chief Justice of the Common Pleas (1297–1308), the founder of the family.[1]

When estates and dignities are inherited by or through females, and the paternal name is continued by assumption, the chasm is bridged over, and much of the prescriptive feeling popularly attached to an historic family is speedily won back. This is as it should be, assuming the essence of inherited nobility or gentry to consist in our progenitors having been long enough in the higher class to be under the influence of the maxim, *noblesse oblige*. Female descent will not break the chain of elevating associations when the property and social position are retained and transmitted by an heiress, whilst male descent will hardly preserve these unimpaired long after the estates are separated from the name and its bearers are blended with the crowd. If it takes three generations to make a gentleman,[2] we fear it will not take much more to unmake one; and the last Duchess of Douglas surely stretched a point when she frequently invited a London tailor, named Douglas, to dine with her, on the score of a distant connection with her house.

The Percys, who stand at the head of Sir Bernard Burke's examples of vicissitude, hold their heads quite

[1] This topic is fully and ably treated by Mr. Charles Long, in his 'Royal Descents: a Genealogical List of the several Persons entitled to quarter the Arms of the Royal Houses of England,' published in 1854. 'The nature of mere Royal descents,' he remarks, 'is well known to dabblers in genealogy. When once you are enabled to place your client in a current of decent blood, you are certain to carry him up to some one of the great fountains of honour,—Edward the Third, Edward the First, or Henry the Third.' American genealogists assert that Washington was of the blood-royal of England. The descendants of the Kings of Scotland are equally numerous.

[2] 'At this time (*temp.* Ed. III.) there was a distinction of gentlemen of blood and gentlemen of coat-armour, and the third from him that had first coat-armour was to all intents and purposes held a gentleman of blood.'—*Gwillym.*

as high, and are allowed their precedence almost as readily, as if they could trace a clear descent through males from the first Norman Percy. But the male line of the English branch became extinct as near its source as the reign of Henry II., when Agnes de Percy, daughter and heiress of William, the third lord, married Joceline of Louvain, son of the Duke of Lower Brabant, who assumed the name and arms of the Percys. No diminution of rank can have resulted from such an alliance; and from this renewal of the stock till the death of the eleventh earl in 1670, no succession of feudal nobles played a more conspicuous part or were more frequently mixed up in the troubles of the State. With their vast possessions and paramount influence in the North, it was hardly possible for the Earls of Northumberland to avoid taking a side in every intestine commotion or struggle for supremacy, political or religious; and what with capricious changes of creed by royal command at one time and jarring pretensions to the crown at another, they must have been singularly fortunate, or miraculously sagacious, if they had contrived to be always in the right or always on the winning side. After making all reasonable allowances, however, it must be owned that the Percys had a wonderful knack at getting into difficulty. They not only found rebellion when it lay in their way, but frequently went out of their way to find it, and the result was that, for one of their chiefs to die a natural death, was rather the exception than the rule.

The first earl was slain at Bramham Moor, his brother was beheaded, and his son, Hotspur, fell at Shrewsbury. The second earl was killed at St. Albans; the third at Towton; the fourth was murdered by a mob; the fifth died in his bed, but his second son was attainted and executed at Tyburn, and his eldest, the sixth earl, died of grief and mortification after earning the title of 'The Unthrifty' by the improvident waste

of his inheritance. For some years after his death the succession was interrupted by the attainder of his brother, and a cloud obscured the fortunes of the family. They had to undergo the mortification of seeing the dukedom of Northumberland conferred on a Dudley; but he, too, getting attainted soon afterwards, the earldom was restored to the rightful heir, who, untaught by adversity, joined the rising of the North against Queen Elizabeth, and ended his life on the scaffold. He makes the seventh. The eighth was sent to the Tower for his exertions in favour of Mary Queen of Scots, and was shot or shot himself there. The ninth was fined 30,000*l.* and sentenced to imprisonment for life on a charge of being concerned in the Gunpowder Plot.

The eleventh, the last male of the English branch, left an only daughter, whose career might match that of the most erratic or adventurous of her race. Before she was sixteen, she had been twice a widow and three times a wife. She was married at thirteen to the only son of the Duke of Newcastle, a lad of her own age, who died in a few months. Her second husband was Thynne of Longleat, 'Tom of Ten Thousand,'[1] but the marriage was never consummated, and the tie was abruptly severed by the bullet of an assassin, set on by the notorious Count Königsmark, who had been a suitor for her hand, and was desirous of another chance. She then married the proud Duke of Somerset, and probably made him a fitting mate, for when his second wife, a Finch, tapped him familiarly on the shoulder, or, according to another version, seated her-

[1] So called from his being the reputed possessor of ten thousand a year. He had seduced a maid of honour, which, coupled with his incomplete marriage, gave rise to this epigram:—

'Here lies Tom Thynne, of Longleat Hall,
Who never would so have miscarried
Had he married the woman he lay withal,
Or lain with the woman he married.'

self on his knee, he exclaimed indignantly, 'My first duchess was a Percy, and she never thought of taking such a liberty.' One of the most remarkable incidents in her life was yet to come. It was she who, by dint of tears and supplications, prevented Queen Anne from making Swift a bishop, out of revenge for the 'Windsor Prophecy,' in which she is ridiculed for the redness of her hair and upbraided as having been privy to the murder of her second husband. 'It was doubted,' says Scott, 'which imputation she accounted the more cruel insult, especially since the first charge was undoubted, and the second arose only from the malice of the poet.'

When the fortunes of the House of Avenel apparently all hang on Mary, and her marriage with Halbert Glendinning is at hand, the White Spirit looks with sorrow on her golden zone, now diminished to the fineness of a silken thread, and exclaims:

> 'The knot of fate at length is tied,
> The churl is lord, the maid is bride;
> Wither bush, and perish well,
> Fall'n is the lofty Avenel.'

The spirit or genius, if there be one, which watches over the fortunes of the Percys must have undergone a corresponding sense of depression when by the death of Algernon, the son and successor of the proud duke, without male issue, their honours again devolved on a female, who married Sir Hugh Smithson, a Yorkshire baronet of good family. His son is known to fame as having elicited the solitary *bon mot* attributed to George III. Disappointed at not getting the Garter, in addition to all the rest of the titles and honours commonly enjoyed by the head of his wife's family, he bitterly exclaimed that he was the first Duke of Northumberland that had ever been refused the Garter. 'Yes,' was the retort; 'and the first Smithson that ever asked for it.'

The main line of the Nevilles presents one of the most startling instances of vicissitude, when we contrast the position of the great Earl of Warwick, the kingmaker, in the zenith of his power, and that of his descendant, Charles Neville, sixth Earl of Westmoreland, in 1572. The last of the barons, as Lord Lytton terms Warwick, enjoyed yearly revenues estimated at 300,000*l.* of our money, and feasted daily 30,000 persons at the open tables of his castles. His descendant in the fourth degree was living in the Low Countries on a small pension allowed him by the King of Spain, and is mentioned by Lord Seton, in a letter to Mary Queen of Scots, as having 'neither penny nor halfpenny.' He remained in the same penniless state until his death, without male issue, in 1601.

The 'Doom of Buckingham,' the heading of one of Sir Bernard Burke's sections, is well justified by the fatality which seems to haunt the possessors of the dukedom. It was first bestowed on Humphrey de Stafford, who, with his eldest son, fell in the wars of the Roses. His second son and successor in the title was the friend and victim of Richard III., in whose honour Cibber interpolated the famous line which has made the fortune of more than one provincial actor. The sad story of the third duke may also be read in Shakespeare. He had imprudently defied Wolsey, who found no difficulty in trumping up a charge of treason, upon which the duke was found guilty by his peers and beheaded on Tower Hill. When the Emperor Charles V. heard of his execution, he is reported to have exclaimed, 'A butcher's dog has killed the finest *buck* in England.' The ducal title became extinct by his attainder, and the revival of the barony proved only a transitory gleam, for the male line expired towards the middle of the seventeenth century with Roger Stafford, who during much of an unhappy life bore the name of Fludd or Floyde. His sister married

a joiner, and was the mother of the Newport cobbler already mentioned as entitled to quarter the royal arms. The first Villiers, Duke of Buckingham, fell by the knife of Felton. The death-bed of the second has been immortalised by Pope, and the moral is little weakened by the assurance that instead of—

> 'In the worst inn's worst room, with mat half-hung,
> The walls of plaster, and the floors of dung,'

we should read, 'in a well-furnished apartment of his steward's house.' Sheffield, Duke of Buckingham, so created in 1703, reflected quite as much lustre on the title as he derived from it; but his race ended with his son, who died of a consumption at Rome before attaining his majority.

We willingly drop a veil over the contemporary annals of this fated dukedom. They form a chapter of family history which, considering how very little of it is accurately known, has been more than sufficiently discussed. We shall only say that whatever is known redounds to the honour of the present bearer of the title. But whilst mourning over the dismantlement of Stowe and the irremediable dispersion of its varied treasures, we are irresistibly reminded of Canons, and are tempted to ask whether the star of Buckingham has not been rendered more lurid instead of brighter by its junction with that of Chandos—

> 'At Timon's villa let us pass a day,
> Where all cry out, What sums are thrown away!'

Though Pope tried hard to evade the responsibility, his satire was undoubtedly levelled at the Duke of Chandos, who impoverished himself and his heirs by laying out 200,000*l.* on a villa which they were obliged to pull down.

The Cromwells have risen as high and fallen as low as any family recorded in history. Dugdale says that Thomas Cromwell, Earl of Essex, the 'mauler of mo-

nasteries,' as Fuller calls him, was the son of a blacksmith at Putney, and had served under the Duke of Bourbon at the sacking of Rome. Having no children, he adopted and enriched a nephew, Sir Richard Williams, who took the name and became the progenitor of the race. There are five intermediate links between him and the Protector, on whose career it is superfluous to expatiate. The rapid degradation of the entire family, in all its branches, is the phenomenon which invites attention. The Protector had four sons and four daughters. Two of his sons survived him: Richard, who succeeded to the protectorate, and Henry, Lord Deputy of Ireland. Richard, whose reign lasted not quite eight months, resided abroad for the next twenty years, and is commonly believed to have assumed the name of Clarke on his return. This is hardly reconcilable with a story told by Miss Hawkins, on Lord Hardwicke's authority, of the ex-Protector's appearance in the Court of Chancery in 1705.

'The counsel made very free and unhandsome use of his (Richard Cromwell's) name, which, offending the good feelings of the Chancellor (Cowper), who knew he must be in court, and, at that time, a very old man, he looked round and said, "Is Mr. Cromwell in Court?" On his being pointed out in the crowd, he very benignly said, "Mr. Cromwell, I fear you are very inconveniently placed where you are; pray, come and take a seat on the bench by me." Of course, no more hard speeches were uttered against him. Bulstrode Whitelocke, then at the bar, said to Mr Yorke, "This day so many years, I saw my father carry the Great Seal before that man at Westminster Hall."'

He died in 1712, leaving two daughters and no male issue. Henry, the ex-Lord Deputy, resided, till his death in 1673, at his estate of Spinney Abbey, in Cambridgeshire. He left five sons and one daughter. All the sons died without issue, except one, who, after

losing or spending all his property, wrote thus to Lady Fauconberg, his aunt: 'Our family is low, and some are willing it should be kept so; yet I know we are a far ancienter family than many others. Sir Oliver Cromwell's my grandfather's, uncle's, and godfather's estate that was, is now let for above 50,000*l.* a year.' His son Thomas carried on the business of a grocer on Snow Hill, and died in 1748, leaving an only son, Oliver, solicitor and clerk to St. Thomas's Hospital, who succeeded, as devisee of two female cousins, to an estate at Theobald's, Herts, which had been granted by Charles II. to General Monk. He died in 1821, leaving one daughter, married to Mr Russell of Cheshunt Park.

'With this Oliver Cromwell, the attorney and the son of the grocer,' says Sir Bernard Burke, 'the male line of the Lord Protector's family expired.' Yet the pedigree, as set forth in the 'Dictionary of the Landed Gentry,' by the same learned author, reads like that of an ordinary country gentleman, and the grocer figures as an esquire. We strongly suspect that a good many of the pedigrees preserved in such repositories, which look fair enough on the face of them, would be found, on close inspection, to have been similarly interrupted or defaced by mechanic pursuits or misalliances. Amongst the Protector's descendants through females, we read of a basket-maker in Cork, the lineal descendant of Ireton: of one great-granddaughter married to a shoemaker: of a second to a butcher's son, who had been her fellow-servant; and of a great-grandson's son and daughter earning their livelihood as a working jeweller and schoolmistress.

Upon the sarcophagus of the last Hampden is inscribed, 'John Hampden, twenty-fourth hereditary lord of Great Hampden.' The dignity of the family is proved by a tradition that, during a visit with which Edward III. and the Black Prince honoured the con-

temporary lord, a tilting or fencing match led to a quarrel; that the prince received a blow in the face: that the royal party left the house in high dudgeon, and that they took satisfaction for the alleged insult by seizing some of their host's manors. It does not sound likely that, if the pink of chivalry had been intentionally insulted, he would have demanded or accepted damages; but it would appear, from the old rhyme, that something of the sort had occurred:

> 'Tring, Wing, and Ivinghoe
> Hampden did foregoe,
> For striking of a blow,
> And glad he did escape so.'

A brilliant historian has drawn a vivid picture of the degradation to which this family was reduced in the person of one of its last representatives, and sad indeed is the contrast between the character and position of the opponent of shipmoney and that of the grandson in 1695, when he committed suicide.[1]

Few have travelled along the valley of the Tyne without remarking the remains of Prudhoe Castle, now the property of the Percys, and giving a name to one of their dignities. This anciently belonged to the Umfravilles, having been granted, with the surrounding lands, by the Conqueror to their ancestor, Robert with the Beard, to be held by the proud service of defending that part of the realm from wolves and the King's enemies, with the sword which the King wore at his side when he entered Northumberland, and which he bestowed on the said Robert. This family declined from its high estate at no very distant period from its source, but it only became extinct in the male line within living memory. Its last representative but one kept a chandler's shop at Newcastle, and, falling into difficulties, accepted the office of keeper of St. Nicholas' Workhouse in the same city,

[1] See Macaulay's 'History of England,' vol. ii. p. 36; vol. iv. p. 618.

where he died, leaving a widow, with a son and daughter, in absolute destitution. The Duke of Northumberland allowed the widow a pension, and procured a midshipman's appointment for the son, who obtained the rank of captain, but died without issue.

On one side of the same valley, near Hexham, may be seen, on a well-wooded height, the ruined castle of the Ratcliffes, Earls of Derwentwater, whose lands were confiscated in 1716; and exactly opposite are the domains of Beaufront, the ancestral seat of the Erringtons. On the eve of the rising of 1716, the owner of Beaufront and the Earl met by appointment in the road which separates their estates, with the view of proceeding together to the place of meeting, when Errington, turning round to take a farewell look at his mansion, was so struck by its air of comfort, that he could not make up his mind to risk the loss of it; and, after vainly trying to imbue his friend with the same train of feeling, quietly returned home with his retainers. The greater part of the Ratcliffe estates were granted by the Crown to Greenwich Hospital. The representation of the family in the male line has been claimed for Mr. Radclyffe, of Fox Denton Hall, Lancashire; in the female, by a lady who has become notorious by the assertion of her alleged rights. The Erringtons of Beaufront are no more: the last descendants being two brothers, one of whom was a witness to the marriage of George IV. and Mrs. Fitzherbert. The larger part of their Northumbrian estates was devised to the second son of the late Sir Thomas Stanley, who assumed the name of Errington.[1] The old house and grounds were sold to a Newcastle merchant, who built the imposing structure that now stands upon the site.

[1] Now Sir Rowland Stanley Errington, of Hooton and Sandoe, Bart., the lineal representative of the elder branch of the Stanleys.

'The heir of the ancient and illustrious house of De Courcy,' says Dr. W. Jenks, of the United States, 'was discovered in a hardy seaman sailing nearly a century ago out of the harbour of our own Newport; and, in my own time, the legitimate owner of the immense estates of the Grosvenors in a poor farmer of New York. The latter never inherited. The descendant of the former now possesses the family title and estates.'

It is confidently stated in a recent publication, that the lineal representative of Simon de Montfort was a saddler in Tooley Street, and that the representative of the earldom of Mar was once discovered in a coal-pit; that very earldom of which Lord Hales says that its origin is lost in its antiquity. A very near race for the earldom of Crawford might have been run by a hodman. Hugh Miller, who began life as a stonemason, and worked with him, has often heard him addressed, 'John, Yerl Crawford, bring us another hod.'[1] The father of the late Earl of Glengall was a baker's boy when his future honours first dawned upon him. The restoration of the earldom of Huntingdon, in the person of a captain of the Navy, is less surprising, although Lord Macaulay speaks of it as having 'been regained by a series of events scarcely paralleled in romance.' One of the most curious circumstances connected with it was the indifference of the rightful heir, who is said to have been provoked into the assertion of his claim by the insulting refusal of a nobleman to give him satisfaction as an equal.

The Hastings of Daylesford claim to be the main line; and though the family had been broken up and scattered, and the hereditary domains sold, the hope of its revival was fondly cherished by its most distin-

[1] 'Self-Help: with Illustrations of Character and Conduct.' By Samuel Smiles, author of 'The Life of George Stephenson.' London: John Murray, Albemarle Street, 1859.—p. 133.

guished member, under circumstances which might well have deadened all aspirations of the sort. Mr. Disraeli, describing the characteristic longing of the British adventurer in the East exclaims: 'Seated on an elephant, he dreams of Quarter Sessions.' Presiding at the Council Board, or proceeding in solemn state to confer with Rajahs, Warren Hastings was dreaming of a ruined old house in Worcestershire. 'The darling wish of his heart,' says Lord Macaulay, 'had always been to regain Daylesford. At length, in the very year in which his trial commenced, the wish was accomplished, and the domain, alienated more than seventy years before, returned to the descendant of its old lords.'

The most eloquent lamentation over the decay of ancient families was pronounced on the judgment-seat. In the year 1626 the death of Henry de Vere, Earl of Oxford, gave rise to a contest for the earldom, between Robert de Vere, claiming as heir male of the body of Aubrey de Vere, and Lord Willoughby of Eresby, claiming as heir-general of the last Earl. Chief Justice Crewe spoke thus:

'This great and weighty cause, incomparable to any other that hath happened at any time, requires great deliberation, and solid and mature judgment, to determine it; and I wish that all the Judges of England had heard it (being a fit case for all), to the end we all together might have given our humble advice to your lordships herein. Here is represented to your lordships *certamen honoris*, and, as I may well say, *illustris honoris*, illustrious honour. I heard a great peer of this realm, and a learned, say, when he lived there was no king in Christendom had such a subject as Oxford. He came in with the Conqueror, Earl of Gwynes; shortly after the Conquest made Great Chamberlain of England, above five hundred years ago, by Henry I., the Conqueror's son, brother to Rufus; by Maud, the Empress, Earl of Oxford; confirmed and approved by Henry II. *Alberico comiti*, so Earl before. This great honour, this high and noble dignity, hath continued ever since in the remarkable surname of De

Vere, by so many ages, descents, and generations, as no other kingdom can produce such a peer in one and the self-same name and title. I find in all this length of time but two attainders of this noble family, and those in stormy and tempestuous times, when the government was unsettled and the kingdom in competition. I have laboured to make a covenant with myself that affection may not press upon judgment; for I suppose there is no man that hath any apprehension of gentry or nobleness, but his affection stands to the continuance of so noble a name and house, and would take hold of a twig or a twine-thread to uphold it. And yet Time hath his revolutions; there must be a period and an end to all temporal things—*finis rerum*, an end of names and dignities, and whatsoever is terrene, and why not of De Vere? For where is Bohun? Where is Mowbray? Where is Mortimer? Nay, which is more and most of all, where is Plantagenet? They are entombed in the urns and sepulchres of mortality. And yet let the name and dignity of De Vere stand so long as it pleaseth God!'—*Jones's Rep.*, 101.

The decision was in favour of the male heir. On the death of his son in 1702, without issue, the line became extinct.

It has been said that the three noblest names in Europe are (or were) the De Veres of England, the Fitzgeralds of Ireland, and the Montmorencys of France; and, without going quite the length of the Chief Justice's enthusiasm, we should have supposed, with him, 'there is no man that hath any apprehension of gentry or nobleness,' but would be anxious for the continuance of either of them, especially if it were rightfully his own. Yet it is an undoubted fact that, conspicuous amongst the English or Norman settlers in Ireland who, becoming *Hibernis Hiberniores*, adopted the names as well as the dress and habits of the Irish septs whom they dispossessed, were the Veres or De Veres of Ulster, who became M'Sweenies, and the Geraldines or Fitzgeralds of Dromana, on the Blackwater, who called themselves McShenies.[1] From docu-

[1] See Spenser's 'State of Ireland.'

ments quoted in Chalmers' 'Caledonia,' it appears that the name Vere, or Weir, was not uncommon amongst the Norman settlers in Scotland in the twelfth century. The male line of 'Oxford's famed De Vere,' however, is confessedly extinct; and, although a gallant attempt has been made to restore the patronymic with the most euphonious accompaniment, we fear that generations must pass away before the prescriptive and time-hallowed associations will return to it.[1]

The family of Drummond is conspicuous amongst those which have undergone the most trying reverses without losing any portion of their vitality or self-restoring power; and fortunately it has found an annalist in one who, both from inclination and capacity, was best qualified to do it justice. It occupies a prominent place in Mr. Henry Drummond's 'History of Noble British Families,' which, even in its unfinished state, forms an epoch in that branch of literature which it enriches and adorns.

The Drummond pedigree commences with a scion of the royal house of Hungary (said to descend from Attila), named Maurice, who commanded the ship in which Edgar Atheling and his sisters were conveyed to Hungary. One of these, Margaret, was afterwards married to Malcolm Cean-Mohr (great head), King of Scotland, who endowed Maurice with the lands of Drymen or Drummond, in Dumbartonshire. The alliances and acquired dignities of the family are in keeping with this descent. Besides intermarrying with the Spanish Bourbons, the Bruces, the Stewarts, and other royal or princely houses, it has given a queen to Scotland, and figured in every grade of the peerage as well as in almost every high order of knighthood.

[1] In 1832, Sir Aubrey de Vere Hunt obtained the Royal licence to drop the name of Hunt, and became Sir Aubrey de Vere, on the strength of his descent from the daughter of John de Vere (second son of an Earl of Oxford) who died in 1539.

Its partial eclipse dates from the Revolution of 1688, when its chief adhered to the fallen dynasty, without taking the precaution, common in Scotland, of having a leading member on the other side; and an attainder was the result. Their British peerages became legally extinct, and were ill-compensated by the St. Germains' honours lavished on that counsellor of the banished king whom Lord Macaulay has exerted his unrivalled powers to stigmatize.[1]

The crisis, which proved so disastrous in one way, was eminently favourable to them in another. Andrew Drummond, who settled in London soon after the Union with Scotland, having a turn for business and a character for integrity, was intrusted with the management of the pecuniary affairs of many of the exiled Jacobites, and at length his consignments and investments increased to such an extent, that he was induced to send for two of his nephews to assist him. This was the origin of the celebrated establishment of Drummond and Co., of Charing Cross, who, before the close of the last century, had been appointed bankers to the Hanoverian sovereign of these realms. Three or four fresh stocks of Drummonds have already sprung from it. The social connections of the partners are on a par with the commercial; and they will probably derive more lustre directly or indirectly from its wealth and credit than from any revival of titles. Whether the original Andrew, with all his shrewdness, would have thought so, may be questioned; for Mr. H. Drummond tells us that it was his pride in his latter years to insist on the essential difference between a banker and a gentleman whose necessities obliged him to keep a banking-house. Just so, M. Jourdain's

[1] Mr. H. Drummond states that, on the death of James, Louis XIV. engrafted into the nobility of France all on whom titles had been conferred at St. Germains by James. The earldom of Perth was restored by the reversal of the attainder in 1849.

father, far from being a draper, merely kept a stock of cloth which he exchanged for money to suit the convenience of his friends.

The position of the Drummond family naturally raises the question, how far the pursuit of commerce is a derogation from nobility. In Spain and Germany it would be so considered; but no loss of caste could have been entailed by commerce in Venice or Genoa. In some provinces of France, prior to the Revolution, a noble about to engage in trade might formally suspend his nobility by delivering up his sword; and, the circumstances being duly registered, resume it, on retiring from business, with his pristine rank and privileges unimpaired.[1] It was understood that, when the head of the banking-house of Smith and Co. was raised to the peerage by the title of Lord Carrington, his retirement from the bank was made a condition precedent by Mr. Pitt at the express desire of George III., who had German notions about rank. Lord Ashburton and Lord Overstone had withdrawn from their respective firms before their admission to the Upper House; but Lord Overstone was distinctly informed that his elevation did not depend on his secession; and there never was a period in England when merchant was otherwise than an honourable designation. 'Our most respectable families,' says Gibbon, 'have not disdained the counting-house, or even the shop; their names are enrolled in the Livery and Companies of London; and in England, as well as in the Italian commonwealths, heralds have been compelled to declare that gentility is not degraded by the exercise of trade.'

It is hardly necessary to repeat that several English peerages of no mean antiquity were founded by

[1] 'This right (of bearing arms) is lost by exercising mean trades. But when they leave off these they return to their former dignities.'—*Pap. Decis.* 196. (*Gwillym*).

merchants or traders; but we suspect that Mr. Smiles has been hurried by his favourite topic into a little unconscious exaggeration when recapitulating them:

'The great bulk of our peerage is comparatively modern, so far as the titles go; but it is not the less noble that it has been recruited to so large an extent from the ranks of honourable industry. In olden times, the wealth and commerce of London, conducted as it was by energetic and enterprising men, was a prolific source of peerages. Thus, the earldom of Cornwallis was founded by Thomas Cornwallis, the Cheapside merchant; that of Essex by William Capel, the draper; and that of Craven by William Craven, the merchant tailor. The modern Earl of Warwick is not descended from "the Kingmaker," but from William Greville, the woolstapler; whilst the modern Dukes of Northumberland find their head, not in the Percies, but in Hugh Smithson, a respectable London apothecary.[1] The founders of the families of Dartmouth, Radnor, Ducie, and Pomfret were respectively a skinner, a silk manufacturer, a merchant tailor, and a Calais merchant; whilst the founders of the peerages of Tankerville, Dormer, and Coventry were mercers. The ancestors of Earl Romney, and Lord Dudley and Ward, were goldsmiths and jewellers; and Lord Dacres was a banker in the reign of Charles I., as Lord Overstone is in that of Queen Victoria. Edward Osborne, the founder of the dukedom of Leeds, was apprentice to William Hewet, a rich clothworker on London Bridge, whose only daughter he courageously rescued from drowning, by leaping into the Thames after her, and eventually married. Among other peerages founded by trade are those of Fitzwilliam, Leigh, Petre, Cowper, Darnley, Hill, and Carrington.'—*Self-Help*, pp. 133-4.

Any line of life which leads to wealth and honours will always attract recruits of promise from all ranks; and indications are not wanting that, long before the profession of arms had ceased to arrogate precedence, youths of gentle birth were occasionally bred up to trade. Thus (in the 'Fortunes of Nigel') Scott describes Tunstall, one of George Heriot's apprentices, as

[1] Sir Hugh Smithson, who married the heiress of the Percys, was fifth in descent from the first baronet, created in 1660.

the last hope of an ancient race; and Rashleigh Osbaldiston (in 'Rob Roy'), with all his pride of birth, willingly consents to take his cousin's place in the counting-house. Sir Dudley North, the Turkey merchant, was a peer's son. Sir William Capel, founder of the Essex earldom, was the younger son of the son of a knight.

According to Mr. Foss, the author of 'The Grandeur of the Law,' a diligent and scrupulous antiquary, between seventy and eighty peerages, including the premier dukedom, have been founded by the legal profession; and when Thurlow was twitted by the Duke of Grafton with the recent date of his peerage, he replied:—

'The noble duke cannot look before him, behind him, or on either side of him, without seeing some noble peer who owes his seat in this House to successful exertions in the profession to which I belong. Does he not feel that it is as honourable to owe it to these as to being the accident of an accident? To all these noble lords the language of the noble duke is as applicable and as insulting as it is to me.'

In the olden time, a forensic career afforded no presumption whatever of a plebeian origin. So exclusive was the Bar, that there exists an ordinance, countersigned by Bacon, closing its portals, the Inns of Court, against all but gentlemen entitled to coat armour. It must not therefore be hastily inferred that every family sprung from law or commerce had a mean beginning, any more than that every pedigree which can be carried back to the Conquest began with a gentleman. If we may believe Thierry or the authorities collected by him, William's army was principally composed of the lowest and most disreputable adventurers of a lawless age, the very scum of the population of central Europe, brought together by the hope of plunder. Numbers, we learn, who landed as footboys or camp followers, decked themselves out in the spoils of the

dead or vanquished, passed muster as knights or esquires, and received grants accordingly:

'The cowherds of Normandy and the weavers of Flanders, with a little courage and good luck, speedily became great men in England, illustrious barons; and their names, vile or obscure on one coast of the Channel, were noble and glorious on the other. "Would you know," thus runs an old French record, "the names of the great men who came over with the Conqueror William? These are their sirnames as they are found written, but without their Christian names, which are often wanting or changed: they are Mandeville and Dandeville, Omfreville and Domfreville, Bonteville and Estonteville, Mohun and Bohun, Biset and Basset, Malin and Malvoisin." All the names that follow are similarly ranged, so as to aid the memory by the rhyme and alliteration. Many lists of the same kind, and disposed with the same art, have been preserved to our days; they were discovered inscribed on large pages of vellum in the archives of churches, and decorated with the title of "Livre des Conquérants."

'In one of these lists, the names are ranged in groups of three: Bastard, Brassard, Baynard; Bigot, Bagot, Talbot; Toret, Rivet, Bonet; Lucy, Lacy, Percy, &c. Another catalogue of the conquerors of England, long preserved in the treasury of Battle Abbey, contained names of a singularly mean and odd aspect, like Bonvilain and Boutevilain, Trousselot and Troussebout, l'Engagne and Longue-Epée, L'Oeil de Bœuf and Front-de-Bœuf. Finally, many authentic documents designate as Norman knights in England, a Gillaume le charretier, a Hugues le tailleur, a Guillaume le tambour; and amongst the sirnames of this chivalry collected from all corners of Gaul figure a great number of simple names of towns and countries: Saint Quentin, Saint Maur, Saint Denis, Saint Malo, Tournai, Verdun, Fismes, Chaloner, Chaunes, Etampes, Rochefort, La Rochelle, Cahors, Champagne, Gascogne. Such were they who carried to England the titles of noble and gentleman, and planted them there by force for them and their descendants.'[1]

[1] 'Histoire de la Conquête de l'Angleterre par les Normands, &c.,' vol. ii. pp. 34–36. Hume says, that 'they (the English nobles) had the

Two lists are printed in Holinshed, one 'as we find them written in the Chronicles of Normandy by one William Tailleur,' which contains about 170 names, and is confessedly incomplete; the other 'transcribed from the roll of Battle Abbey,' containing above 600 names. The smaller list purports to include only men of rank, who are almost invariably designated by a territorial title, as earl or seigneur. The Battle Abbey roll gives merely the surname, without distinction of rank, or even the prefix of *de*, which throws considerable doubt on its antiquity, considering that surnames were not fixed for a full century after the event. Allowing for variations in spelling, a great many of those mentioned in the roll are still common in England, but it is to be hoped that persons who lay claim to them will not act like the members of the ducal family who have changed their historic name of Seymour for St. Maur; this being unluckily one of the instances cited by Thierry to discredit the gentility of the conquerors. Misled possibly by so imposing an example, an Irish barrister, hight Mullins, not long since appeared amongst his astonished friends as Desmoulins. Dr. Warren of Boston maintains that most of the Warrens on both sides of the Atlantic are de Warrennes. The Pooles of Devonshire suddenly became De la Poles, but thought better of it, and became simple Pooles again. The late Serjeant Bumpas might have been excused for reverting to Bonpas; but the constant endeavour to elevate Smith into Smyth or Smythe, has an awkward analogy to Jonathan Wild's uncertainty whether his name should not be spelt Wyld.

If this fashion should spread, the Drummonds may

mortification of seeing their estates and manors possessed by Normans of the meanest birth and lowest stations.'—'History of England,' ch. iv.

choose amongst fifteen varieties of spelling; the Bruces amongst sixty: the Percivals amongst five or six; the Evelyns amongst a round dozen. The Cecils will or may become Sytsilts:[1] the Bruces,—Brahusses, Braos, Bruis, Brus, or Brewse: the Howards,—Herewards, Hawards, or Hogwards: the Russells,—du Rosels; the Montgomerys, Mumdegrumbies:[2] the Campbells, Campo Bellos: the Stirlings of Keir, Stryvelings: and the characteristic controversy between Home and Hume must be revived. Although the name was always pronounced Hume in Scotland, and was afterwards written Hume, Heaume, or Hoome, in old documents, John Home, the author of 'Douglas,' vehemently contended for the *o*, whilst David Hume, who belonged to the Ninewell branch of the same family, was wont to irritate his cousin by jocularly insisting on the *u*. On one occasion he proposed to decide by a cast of the dice which should adopt the other's mode of spelling: 'Nay,' says John, 'this is a most extraordinary proposal indeed, Mr. Philosopher; for if you lose, you take your own name, and if I lose, I take another man's name.'

Mr. Lane's ingenious attempt to restore the orthography of the oriental names in the 'Arabian Nights' Entertainments' has been received with little favour by the majority of English readers, who find their earliest and most cherished impressions confused and broken when they stumble upon Jinns and Wezéers, or meet their old acquaintances Aladdin and Sindbad the Sailor under the uncouth aliases of Ala-ed-deen

[1] 'The name, like all others of similar antiquity, has been variously written, Sitsilt, Seisel, Cyssel, and Cecil; but their descent from Robert Sitsilt, who, in 1091, the fourth year of the reign of William Rufus, was coadjutor to Robert Fitz-Haman in his conquest of Glamorganshire, seems never to have been questioned by the most scrupulous antiquary.' —(*Jacob.*)

[2] Collins states that Robert de Mumdegrumbie was the founder of the Eglinton family.

and Es-Sindibad of the Sea. How will they feel when English History is subjected to the same process? A century hence they may be sorely puzzled by the reply of Sir Edward Seymour to King William, when asked whether he was of the Duke of Somerset's family: 'No, Sir, the Duke of Somerset is of mine.' Five or six centuries of proved nobility are enough, in all conscience, to satisfy the pride of any race; and a great deal less may suffice when popular homage has been attracted to a name by its frequent occurrence in a country's annals in connection with valour, genius, patriotism, or statesmanship. The splendour of the illustrious house of Russell will not be perceptibly diminished by our discarding Mr. Wiffen's laboured theory of its rise, and accepting as its founder one John Russell, constable of Corfe Castle in 1221, who, according to Dugdale, 'gave fifty marks to the king for license to marry the sister of Doun Bardolff, a great man in those days.' Shakespeare has done more for the Talbots, Stanleys, Cliffords, Nevilles, Greys, Blounts, and Vernons than the Heralds' College; whilst 'the gentle Surrey' and Howard of Effingham may save the premier Duke the trouble of tracing his paternal descent beyond the Chief Justice.

In illustration of the difficulty in tracing descents up to the Conquest, Mr. Drummond says: 'Baudrey le Fenton, a near relation by marriage of the Conqueror, and, therefore, no mean man, had six sons, not one of whom was called by his father's surname, *if indeed he had one*, and no two are called by the same surname. . . . As to armorial bearings, either none were worn, or they were changed continually, or else they were taken irrespectively of relationship, as was seen in the case of the Beauchamps: four of them, although near relations, had armorial bearings totally dissimilar one from the other.' The first Earl of Pembroke, being a Welshman, had no surname, and

adopted that of Herbert, which was the Christian name of an ancestor in the fourth or fifth degree.

Armorial bearings first grew into general use among the greater nobles during the Crusades, but that they remained unfixed for more than two centuries is proved by the famous Scrope and Grosvenor case, tried before the High Court of Chivalry and apparently exceeding even the Tichborne Case in length. It lasted from August 17, 1385, to May 27, 1390, and not less than four hundred witnesses were examined, including Owen Glendower, Hotspur, Geoffrey Chaucer, and John of Gaunt. The examination of the author of the 'Canterbury Tales,' as duly set down, ran thus:

'What say you, Geoffrey Chaucer? does the coat, "Azure a bend or," belong of right to Sir Richard le Scrope?

'Yes,' replies Chaucer. 'I saw him so armed in France, before the town of Retters; and I saw Sir Henry Scrope armed with the same arms, with a white label, and with banner; and I further depose that the said Sir Richard was armed in the entire arms during the whole expedition, until I myself was taken.'

'Being asked how he knew that the arms appertained to Sir Richard, he replied:—"That he had heard old knights and esquires say that they had had continual possession of the said arms; and that he had seen them displayed on banners, glass, paintings, and vestments, and commonly called the arms of Scrope." Being further pressed as to whether he had ever heard of any interruption or challenge made by Sir Robert Grosvenor or his ancestors, he said:—"No; but that he was once in Friday Street, London, and, walking through the street, he observed a new sign hanging out with these arms thereon, and inquired, 'What inn that was that had hung out these arms of Scrope?' and one answered him, saying, 'They are not hung out, sir, for the arms of Scrope, nor painted there for those arms; but they are painted and put there by a knight of the county of Chester, called Sir Robert Grosvenor;' and that was the first time that he had ever heard speak of Sir Robert Grosvenor or his ancestors, or of any one bearing the name of Grosvenor."'

Although the evidence on many points was contradictory, a plausible claim founded on user was established by each of the competitors, and the decision was that the precise coat of arms in dispute, *azure a bend or*, belonged to Scrope, but that the same arms within a plain *bordure argent* should be borne by Grosvenor, who forthwith appealed to the King. The appeal was heard with becoming solemnity in the great chamber of Parliament, within the royal palace of Westminster, but the royal decree confirmed the decision of the Court of Chivalry.

'Treason, sacrilege, and proscription,' says Gibbon, 'are often the best titles of ancient nobility.' In the course of a debate, in 1621, turning on some alleged exercise of the royal prerogative in feudal times, the first Lord Spencer was thus roughly rebuked by the Earl of Arundel: 'My lord, my lord, when these things were doing, your ancestors were keeping sheep.' 'When my ancestors were keeping sheep,' retorted the new peer, 'yours were plotting treason.' As the descent of the Spencers, or Le Despensers, is of more than average antiquity, the reproach was evidently levelled at their tame unenterprising mode of life; and the retort is singularly pointless, for a wealthy and influential family must have been lamentably unproductive of men of spirit and energy if it lasted out the Wars of the Roses without plotting or executing what one faction or the other would denounce and punish as treason. We read with indignation and contempt of the country squire who, on the morning of a battle during the great Rebellion, was seen within hearing, and almost within sight of the hostile armies, quietly drawing his covers for a fox; and there is small ground for self-complacency in a long line of progenitors, when the unbroken succession is owing to dulness or pusillanimity. Indeed nothing has tended to elevate a family above its compeers so much as any

sort of exploit, adventure, or even notable mishap, performed or sustained by an ancestor, whether in strict accordance with modern morality or not. The Armstrongs, with the genuine border feeling, are proud of the numbers of their name that have been hanged. When Mr. Popham christened his horse (the winner of the Derby) 'Wild Darell,' he invited attention to the manner in which his ancestor, the Chief Justice, is said to have obtained Littlecott. If he wants to go a little further back, he may quote—

> 'Popham, Horner, and Thynne,
> When the monks popped out, they popped in.'

Or the Horners may rely on the nursery rhyme, in which 'little Jack Horner' puts in his thumb and pulls out a plum, *i. e.* a grant of fat abbey lands.[1] When the nuns of Wilton imploringly asked the Earl of Pembroke what was to become of them, he exclaimed, 'Go spin, you jades, go spin.' The Herberts do not need so modern an illustration, and may be content to drop it, unless indeed the late Lord Herbert's laudable patronage of needlewomen was intended as an atonement for his progenitor's hard-heartedness to the sex.

The Burdetts shine out as of knightly distinction in the reign of Edward IV., by aid of the Sir Robert who was executed for conspiring the death of that monarch; although we do not place implicit reliance on Lord Campbell's statement that his sole offence lay in his saying, when his favourite white buck was killed by Edward: 'I wish the buck, horns and all, in the King's belly.

[1] The better accredited story is that John Horner was entrusted by the last Abbot of Glastonbury with a sum of money intended as a bribe to the Royal Commissioners, and concealed in a pie; the contents of which he appropriated to his own use. The Abbot was Abbot Whiting, who was hanged on Glastonbury Tor, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophets, that the abbey would flourish until a fish was seen to fly or float upon the Tor.

The *Agincourt* on the shield of the Wodehouses speaks trumpet-tongued; and the Fulfords of Great Fulford, should their share in the Crusades be questioned, may produce the written capitulation by which, after a gallant defence, they surrendered their house to Fairfax. The Ashburnhams claim to be lineally descended from the Ashburnham, or Eshburnham, high sheriff of Sussex and Surrey in 1066, to whom Harold wrote to assemble the *posse comitatûs*; and Fuller (writing in 1662), states that the original missive was 'lately' in the possession of the family.

The crest of the Cheneys, a bull's scalp, is said to have been won by Sir John Cheney, at Bosworth field, in a hand-to-hand encounter with Richard, who felled him to the ground by a blow which laid the upper part of his head bare. Though stunned by his fall, Sir John recovered after a while, and seeing an ox's hide near him, he cut off the scalp and horns to supply the place of the upper part of his helmet, and in this singular headgear performed miracles of valour. He was certainly created a Baron and a Knight of the Garter for his services at Bosworth, and it is said that the bull's scalp was also assigned him as a crest.

The crest of the Dudleys, of Clopton, was a woman's head helmeted, hair dishevelled, and throat-latch loose, proper. The story, as set down in writing by the parson of the parish in 1390, ran that the father of Agnes Hotot, a great heiress who married the Dudley of the day, having a dispute with one Ringsdale about an estate, it was agreed that they should meet on the debateable land and settle the title by single combat. Hotot, on the day appointed, was laid up with the gout, and the heiress, rather than the land should be lost, donned his armour and encountered Ringsdale, whom she unhorsed. On being declared the victor, she loosed her throat-latch, raised her helmet, and let down her hair about her shoulders, thus proclaiming her sex.

The crest of the Hamiltons is a tree with a saw through it, and their motto *Through.* The explanation is that Sir John Hamilton, grandson of the third Earl of Leicester, having killed John de Spencer, one of Edward II.'s courtiers, was obliged to fly for his life. When on the point of being overtaken, he and his attendant changed clothes with two woodcutters, and were in the act of sawing through a tree when their pursuers came up. To steady his attendant, who was looking round in a manner to excite suspicion, Sir John called out, *Through.* The descent of this family from the Earls of Leicester is apocryphal, and Debrett makes it begin with a Gilbert de Hameldun, whose name occurs in the Chartulary of Paisley, 1272.

The crest of the Stanleys, Earls of Derby, a child in an eagle's nest, is traced to an incident in the Lathom family, from whom they acquired Knowsley. Dugdale's story is, that Sir Thomas de Lathom, being without legitimate male issue, placed his illegitimate son in an eagle's nest in his park, and persuaded his wife to join with him in adopting it as an heir providentially bestowed upon them. The device of the Leslies, 'Grip Fast,' was granted by Margaret, Queen of Scotland (wife of Malcolm Cean Mohr), who, in crossing a flooded river, was thrown from her horse, and in imminent danger of being drowned, when Bartholomew Leslie seized her girdle and drew her to the bank. The crest of the Davenports, of Cheshire, is, 'a man's head couped below the shoulders in profile, hair brown, a halter about his neck, proper.' Mr. Lower's explanation is that one of them, having been taken prisoner in the Wars of the Roses, was spared on condition that he and his posterity would adopt this badge of humiliation.[1] It is not the kind of stipula-

[1] 'The Curiosities of Heraldry, with Illustrations from Old English Writers.' By Mark Anthony Lower. London, J. R. Smith, 1845, sect. 9. This amusing and instructive writer has collected various other

tion that would be held binding on heirs, and in Ormerod's 'History of Cheshire,' the crest is said to have been assumed by one Vivian de Davenport, on being made Grand Serjeant, or principal thief-taker, of the hundred of Macclesfield, in the thirteenth century.

Speaking of Richard de Percival, a follower of Richard Cœur de Lion, Mr. Drummond tells us :—

'It is said that, having lost a leg in an engagement in Palestine, he continued notwithstanding on horseback till he lost his arm also ; and then that he still remained some time in his seat, holding the bridle with his teeth, till he fell from loss of blood and perished, in 1191. As much of the story as relates to his valour is confirmed by an account written by the King's secretary, Iscanus ; and a man in armour, without a leg, was an ancient badge of the family, and was on many windows of their house at Weston.'

If we accept this, it would be unjust to doubt M. De Lamartine's account of the heroism of one of the French generals at Waterloo : 'General Lesourd, having received six sabre wounds, dismounts from his horse whilst his dragoons are rallying for a fresh charge, has his arm amputated and the blood stanched, remounts his horse, and charges with them.'[1]

The 'Luck of Edenhall'[2] carries the Musgroves back into the olden time, although the story of the cup or chalice having been taken from the fairies, may 'live no longer in the faith of reason.' Many incredible legends may prove equally serviceable in the same way. Lady Morgan laid down that a Banshee was indispensable to a genuine old Irish family, and a haunted room has always been a coveted evi-

instances of the same kind. See also Burke's 'Anecdotes of the Aristocracy,' vol. ii. p. 22.

[1] 'Histoire de la Restauration,' book xxv.

[2] According to the legend, the fairies who left the glass, flew away singing :—

'If this glass shall break or fall
Farewell the luck of Edenhall!'

dence of distinction in a mansion. Neither are we prepared to dispute the traditions which carry back some families of the yeomanry, or even peasantry, to periods of remote or indefinite antiquity. A Brighton pastrycook (named Mutton) is said to hold land in Sussex which has been in the name and family since Henry I.; and the lineal representative of the woodman who assisted in conveying William Rufus to the nearest cottage still resides upon the spot. The family of Macnab, the blacksmith, the alleged possessors of the Ossianic manuscripts, were believed to have practised their craft in the same house for four hundred years. Dr. Franklin says that his ancestors 'lived in the same village, Ecton, in Northamptonshire, on a freehold of about thirty acres, for at least three hundred years, and how much longer could not be ascertained. The Webbers have occupied the Halberton Court farm (near Tiverton) as renting farmers, for more than 200 years.

There are instances in which it is impossible to reject tradition without rejecting the sole or best evidence of which the subject admits. But when family pride appeals to popular credulity, we may be pardoned for withholding an immediate or unhesitating assent, even at the bidding of Mr. Drummond, when he urges that it is not enough to be sceptical: that the sceptic must furnish some other heraldic fable and 'lucky fiction,' more probable than the story which has been received by the wisdom of our ancestors. 'If Robert de Yvery was not the said Eudo Britagne, let it be shown who the man was, who had power sufficient to wage successful war against the Count de Breteuil, take him prisoner, hang him up in the middle of winter in his shirt till it froze to his back, and compel him to give his daughter to his enemy in marriage.'

We demur altogether to this argument. We cannot consent to put up with presumptions and conjectures

simply because the absence of direct proof can be satisfactorily accounted for; and although disposed to concur with Mr. Drummond in much of his argument against the Dryasdusts, we must decline his proffered guarantee for the bards—

'The bards,' he urges, 'did indeed exaggerate the exploits and feats which their heroes performed, but they did not invent pure lies: in the language of poetry, they might call a strong man whom their hero had killed a giant, or a bear, or a lion; but they would not have done so if their hero had stayed at home and killed nobody. The bards, minstrels, harpers, pipers of the nobles were their genealogists, and their tales were far more interesting and instructive than a folio of *Rotuli Hundredorum* or the *Testa de Neville*.'

It was the bard's or minstrel's duty to keep his patrons in good humour, and when an infusion of fable would not answer the purpose, he certainly did invent pure lies; as in 'The Brooch of Lorn,' when the bard coolly gives his master credit for a trophy notoriously won—

'Long after Lorn had left the strife,
Content to 'scape with limb and life.'

Bruce, the most interested and best informed listener, quietly remarks—

'Well hast thou framed, old man, thy strains,
To praise the hand that pays thy pains.'[1]

If the bards, minstrels, or pipers are to be accepted as authorities, most Highland chiefs descend from aboriginal princes as naturally as the heroes of mythological antiquity descended from gods or demi-gods; and their progenitors must have been contemporaries of the kings whose portraits adorn, or deface, the walls of Holyrood; the first of whom, Fergus, ascended the Scottish throne, if there was one, just six years after

[1] The credit due to bards and traditions was discussed in the Essay on 'Pearls and Mock Pearls of History,' in the Second Series of these Essays.

the death of Alexander the Great. When Sir Walter Scott gives up a legend or a genealogy, we may be pretty sure that it will not hold water; and he states that Kenneth, the twenty-ninth in descent from Fergus, was the first who possessed territory enough to constitute a kingdom. Unluckily the very traditions of the Highlanders are rendered valueless by their discrepancy, for there is scarcely a clan whose allegiance, like that of the M'Ivors, is not divided between rival pretenders to the chieftainship. The last of the Glengarrys who retained any of the family estates laid claim to the chieftainship of the Clan Macdonald in a letter addressed to the second Lord Macdonald, who laconically replied, 'Till you prove you are my chief, I am yours,—Macdonald.'

Sir Walter thus justifies a well-known peculiarity of his countrymen:—

'The family pride which is often among the Scotch found descending to those who are in such humble situations as to render it ridiculous, has perhaps more of worldly prudence in it than might at first be expected. A Clifford or a Percy, reduced in circumstances, feels a claim of long descent unsuitable to his condition, unavailing to assist his views in life, and ridiculous as contrasted with them. He therefore wishes and endeavours to forget pretensions which his son or grandson altogether loses sight of. On the contrary, the system of entails in Scotland, their extent, and their perpetual endurance, naturally recommend a Home or a Douglas to preserve an account of his genealogy, in case of some event occurring which may render him heir of tailzie to a good estate. A certain number of calculable chances would have made the author of "Douglas" the Earl of Home.'

Notwithstanding the preservative tendency of both law and custom, the chieftainship and wide domains of many of the great Scotch houses have been carried out of the male line by females, and they are one and all exposed to the same difficulty as the English when they try to get beyond the crucial period of the twelfth

century. Chalmers, in his 'Caledonia,' roundly asserts that all the principal Scotch families south of the Forth were founded by Norman, Fleming, or Saxon settlers, more than a century later than the Conquest.

The Duke of Sutherland inherits from the Duchess Countess. The Duke of Buccleugh's paternal ancestor was the unfortunate Duke of Monmouth. The Duke of Richmond is similarly descended from Charles II. Lord Douglas is by male descent a Stewart. The Duke of Hamilton, a Douglas. The royal race of Bruce, made royal by the marriage of King Robert's grandfather with the daughter of David Earl of Huntingdon, is extinct. The Bruces, Earls of Elgin and Marquises of Aylesbury, with some minor branches, are descended from Sir Robert de Bruce, to whom David II. granted the castle and manor of Clackmannan as *dilecto et fideli consanguineo nostro*, in 1359. Whether he was an illegitimate son of King Robert or a distant relative, is unknown. Tradition carries the Grahams up to Greame, a general of Fergus II., in 404; but the first authentically known was William de Graham, whose name appears as a witness to a royal charter in 1128. He was probably a man of note; and at all events seven or eight centuries of nobility may suffice for the descendants of the great Marquis. The founder of the Campbells was Gillespie, who married the heiress of the ancient lairds of Lochow some time in the eleventh century. Sir Colin, called More or the Great, from whom the title of McCallum More is derived, was knighted in 1280.

The genealogical claims of three of the most distinguished Scotch families are incidentally advanced in the dialogue between the Earl of Morton and the Regent Murray, in 'The Monastery:'

'This is but idle talking,' answered Lord Murray. 'In times like these we must look to men, and not to pedigrees. Hay was but a rustic before the battle of Lancarty; the

bloody yoke actually dragged the plough ere it was blazoned on a crest by the herald. Times of action turn princes into peasants, and boors into barons. All families have sprung from one mean man; and it is well if they have never degenerated from his virtue who raised them first from obscurity.'

'My Lord of Murray will please to except the house of Douglas,' said Morton haughtily; 'men have seen it in the tree, but never in the sapling; have seen it in the stream, but never in the fountain. In the earliest of our Scottish annals, the Black Douglas was powerful and distinguished as now.'

'I bend to the honours of the house of Douglas,' said Murray, somewhat ironically; 'I am conscious we of the royal house have little right to compete with them in dignity. What, though we have worn crowns and carried sceptres for a few generations, if our genealogy moves no further back than the humble *Alanus Dapifer?*'

The boast placed in the mouth of Morton was suggested by Godcroft, the historian of the Douglas family, who had said: 'We do not know them in the fountain; not in the root, but in the stem: for we know not which is the mean man that did rise above the vulgar.' Chalmers thinks he has discovered this mean man in one Theobald, the Fleming, to whom Arnold, Abbot of Kelso, granted certain lands on Douglas Water, between 1147 and 1160. Sir Walter Scott is at issue with Chalmers on this point, but leaves unchallenged another statement of Chalmers, that the first Douglas distinguished in Scottish history was James of Douglas, who was killed on his way to the Holy Land with the heart of Bruce.

Instead of limiting the descent of the Stewarts, Chalmers has carried it farther back, by showing that Alanus Dapifer (Allan Stewart) was the grandson of a man of mark, who obtained the Castle of Oswestry, in Shropshire, from the Conqueror. In his reference to Hay, Lord Murray adopts the tradition that when the Scots were hard pressed in the battle of Lancarty (fought

against the Danes in the tenth century) the tide of battle was turned by a husbandman and his two sons, armed only with the yokes or coulters of their ploughs: that as he lay wounded and gasping on the field, he exclaimed, '*Hay! Hay!*' and that he was rewarded by as much land as a falcon would cover in a flight.

There are three noble families of the name: Tweedale, Errol, and Kinnoul; two of whom (Errol and Kinnoul) clearly recognise the tradition by their crests, mottoes, and supporters; but the best genealogists discredit it, and are content to carry all three up to a Norman settler in the twelfth century, named De la Haya or De la Haye. The name first occurs in the Norman shape, which it retained in the days of Robert Bruce.[1]

Macduff was an historical character, and the claims of the Earls of Fife and Wemyss to be descended from him, are tolerably well authenticated; but the witches' prophecy to Banquo, 'Thou shalt get kings, though thou be none,' was not verified by events. 'Early authorities show no such persons as Banquo and his son Fleance, nor have we reason to think that the latter ever fled farther from Macbeth than across the flat scene, according to the stage directions. Neither were Banquo or his son ancestors of the house of Stuart.' Instead of being a usurper, Macbeth was a legitimate claimant of the throne: instead of being the victim of a midnight and treacherous murder, Duncan was slain in fair fight at a place called Bothgowan, near Elgin, in 1039: instead of being a tyrant, Macbeth was a firm, just, and equitable ruler: instead of being killed at Dunsinane, he fell, two years after his defeat there, at Lumphanan. 'The genius of Shakespeare having found the tale of Macbeth in "The Scot-

[1] 'Where's Nigel Bruce? and De la Haye,
And valiant Seton—where are they?'
Lord of the Isles.

tish Chronicles" of Holinshed, adorned it with a lustre similar to that with which a level beam of the sun often invests some fragment of glass, which, though shining at a distance with the lustre of a diamond, is by a near investigation discovered to be of no worth or estimation.' [1]

Amongst the most striking examples of vicissitude in North Britain may be cited the transfer of Isla from Campbell of that ilk to Mr. Morrison, and the devolution of the estates of five or six ancient families on the Bairds of Garthsherrie Ironworks, whose aggrandisement will not be the less remarkable should they succeed in establishing their descent from the former lairds or barons of that name, their more immediate progenitors having been small farmers. Amongst the families which they have, so to speak, swallowed up, is one which has recently regained a European notoriety, that of the Kirkpatricks of Closeburn, whose crest was a sword dropping blood, and their motto, 'I mak sicher.' Roger Kirkpatrick met Robert Bruce hurrying from the church in which he had stabbed Comyn. 'I doubt,' said Bruce, 'that I have slain him.' 'Do you doubt?' exclaimed Kirkpatrick; 'I'll mak sicher' (make sure); and entering the sanctuary he gave Comyn the *coup-de-grâce* on the very steps of the altar. Hence the motto and the crest. The mother of Eugenie, ex-Empress of the French, was a Kirkpatrick, and when her marriage with the son of a Spanish grandee of the first class was on the carpet, she was required to establish her pedigree. This was done, and it would seem rather overdone, by the aid of Mr. Charles Kirkpatrick Sharpe, for when the document prepared by him was submitted to Ferdinand VII., his Majesty cried out, 'Oh, by all means let the young Montijo marry the daughter of Fingal.'

[1] Sir Walter Scott's 'History of Scotland' (in Lardner's 'Encyclopædia'), chap. ii.

If we were required to specify the country in which, at every epcch of its annals, the fortunes and social condition of persons and families have undergone the most startling reverses, we should unhesitatingly name Ireland. The frequency and wholesale character of the confiscations to which this devoted land has been subjected, are without a parallel in history, and each renewed sentence of forfeiture has involved the degradation or extinguishment of names and races embalmed by tradition or famous in song. To say nothing of English or Norman appropriations under Strongbow, enormous tracts in the South were made over to English adventurers by Elizabeth or her lieutenants: eight hundred thousand acres in the North, comprising nearly all Ulster, were seized at one fell swoop by James; and Cromwell, not content with reducing the Irish contemners of his authority into hewers of wood and drawers of water, compelled whole septs to drop their patronymics and adopt English surnames. Thus O'Neen became Green; O'Duoin, Dunn; O'Cahan, Keene or Cane; De la Poer, Power; M'Shalley, Foley; O'Tuohy, Otway; M'Laghlen, Macklin; O'Sionach, Fox.

We have already mentioned two remarkable changes in an opposite direction, originating in the desire of English settlers to be thoroughly Hibernicised; and from the same motive the FitzUrsulas became Macmahons, and the De St. Aubyns, Dobbyn or Tobyn. The conversion of De Burgh into Bourke or Burke may have been brought about by a common and easy process; yet it was in the capacity of an Irish chieftain treating with the Crown, and under the title of 'Captain of the country of De Burgh,' that the first Earl of Clanricarde condescended to accept a peerage in 1543. A large district in Kilkenny, still known as 'Graces' Country,' was held by the Le Gros, *temp.* Henry II.; and the Walls, who were 'sold up' under the Encumbered Estates Court in 1854, are descended

from a follower of Strongbow, named Du Val. This court will probably do more for the mixture of races, and the separation of ancient descent from property, than Elizabeth, James, or Cromwell, and its records are already replete with touching appeals to sympathy and rich materials for romance. When through its instrumentality the vast estates of the Martins of Galway were transferred to the Law Life Assurance Society, no one can well doubt that the grand object of modern legislation—the greatest good of the greatest number—was promoted by the decree. Yet, in defiance of utilitarians and their philosophy, memory recalls the time when 'Humanity Dick'[1] boasted to George IV. that the approach from his gatehouse to his hall-door was thirty miles in length; and the softened fancy follows his granddaughter, the Princess of Connemara, to the seaport across the Atlantic, where she died poor, an exile, and the last of her race.

The systematic depression of the native Irish is evident from the paucity of old Irish names in the peerage, which at present only contains four—O'Neill, O'Brien, O'Grady, and O'Callaghan; although Sir Bernard Burke thinks that, of the five or six royal families which once divided the island, all, excepting the O'Laughlins, may be carried down to some existing representative. The lineal descendant of the O'Neills, kings of Ireland for six hundred years, is mentioned by Sir Bernard Burke as reduced to the humble lot of a discharged pensioner of the Crown, occupying a room in a small shop in an obscure street (Cook Street, Dublin) where his eldest son carried on the trade of a coffinmaker. The last of the Maguires, princes of Fermanagh, was slain in a skirmish with a royal party

[1] So called from his 'Bill to Prevent Cruelty to Animals.' He once consulted a member of the bar (the writer's cousin) whether *bulls*, not being specially named, were included in 'other animals:' it having been decided that an Act naming deans, rectors, vicars, curates, and 'other clergy,' did not include *bishops*.

under Sir William St. Leger, Vice-President of Munster, in 1600. A few years since a legacy was left to his legal representative, if any, and so many claimants came forward from among the peasantry that the attempt to carry out the bequest was abandoned in despair.

The great Norman families who shared in the first invasion of Ireland have proved less perishable, in proportion to their numbers, than those who took part in the conquest of England. The Fitzgeralds, the Butlers, the Talbots of Malahide, the St. Lawrences, the De Burghs, the Brabazons, and the Fitzmaurices, are lineally descended from the powerful barons who founded their respective houses in the twelfth or thirteenth century. Michael Conrad de Courcy, Lord Kingsale (thirtieth Baron), Premier Baron of Ireland, is the lineal representative of Sir John de Courcy, created Earl of Ulster in 1181, who, for a timely display of valour and strength as champion for King John, was rewarded by a grant to him and his successors of the privilege of remaining covered in the King's presence. Almericus, the twenty-third Baron, having exercised this privilege soon after the arrival of William III., that monarch angrily inquired the meaning of the freedom, and on its being proudly explained to him, remarked, 'Your lordship may put on your hat before *me*, if you choose, but I hope you will take it off before the Queen.' [1]

The most powerful of the Anglo-Norman settlers were the Fitzgeralds and the Butlers. At one period the Butlers had no less than eight peerages, held by separate members of their house; and the time has been when the Fitzgeralds, with one root in the centre and another in the south, were described as overshadowing half the land with their branches. The

[1] Lord Forester enjoys the same privilege under a grant to an ancestor from Henry the Eighth.

history of the Earls of Kildare has been given to the world under the most favourable circumstances and in an eminently attractive shape.[1] We trust that similar justice will be done by the same or an equally accomplished pen to the Fitzgeralds, Earls of Desmond, whose lives are crowded with romantic incidents: as when the sixth earl was dispossessed by his uncle for marrying a beautiful damsel of low degree; or when the Great Earl, lying bound and wounded across the shoulders of his captors, followers of Ormond, was tauntingly asked, 'Where is the mighty Desmond now?' and replied, 'Where he should be—on the necks of the Butlers!' A little later, we find the last recognised bearer of the title, after possessing estates computed to yield him forty thousand gold pieces of annual revenue, risking and losing all in a hopeless rebellion, and perishing in a hovel.

A large share of his spoils was secured by 'the great Earl of Cork' (ancestor of the present earl), whose career, as detailed in his autobiography, is an instructive example of the manner in which Irish property has changed hands. On his first arrival in Dublin in June, 1588, he says, 'All my wealth was 27*l.* 3*s.* in money, a diamond ring, a bracelet of gold, a taffety doublet, a pair of black velvet breeches laced, a new Milan fustian suit laced, and cut upon taffety, two cloaks, competent linen and necessaries, with my rapier and dagger. Just before the Munster rebellion broke out, complaint was made by the Chief Justice of the King's Bench and Common Pleas, and other formidable accusers, that "I came over a young man without any estate or fortune; that I had made so many purchases as it was not possible to do it without some foreign prince's purse to supply me with money; that I had acquired divers castles and abbies upon the

[1] 'The Earls of Kildare and their Ancestors from 1037 to 1773.' By the Marquis of Kildare. Third Edition. Dublin, 1858.

seaside fit to receive and entertain Spaniards, &c. &c."'

The greatest of his subsequent acquisitions was in December, 1602, when 'he (the Lord President of Munster) propounded unto me the purchase of all Sir Walter Rawleigh's lands in Munster, which, by his assistance, and the mediation of Sir Robert Cecil, was perfected, and this was a third addition and rise to my estates.' The purchase-money was 1500*l.* Lismore Castle and its dependencies, now the property of the Dukes of Devonshire, and valued at more than 30,000*l.* a year, formed part of the purchase. Carved in stone, and still legible on the shield over the gate-house, is the earl's motto, 'God's Providence is our inheritance;' though, judging from his conduct, he might have been expected to make his selection between '*Aide toi, et Dieu t'aidera;*" or, 'Put your trust in Providence and keep your powder dry.' In 1641, two years before his death, he computes his revenue, 'besides houses, demesnes, parks, and other royalties,' at 50*l.* a day.

The beautiful valley of the Dargle, including the domains and pleasure-grounds of Powerscourt, Charleville, and Tinnehinch (the favourite abode of Grattan), in the county of Wicklow, formed part of the O'Toole country, which was granted by Queen Elizabeth to Marshal Wingfield, the ancestor of the Viscounts Powerscourt. When he was about to take his leave, after thanking her Majesty for this munificent donation, she inquired if there was anything more she could do to gratify him. 'Yes,' was the adroit reply; 'if your Majesty would graciously add the scarf which you have on, I should prize it more than all the honours and lands you have bestowed.' She took it off and gave it him. In an old portrait at Powerscourt, he is painted wearing it as a shoulder-belt; and the identical scarf was suspended over the picture, till a maiden aunt of

the late viscount cut it up to cover screens or foot-stools; nor, strange to say, could she ever be made to understand that she had done wrong.

The first of the Irish Beresfords figures, about 1611, in the capacity of manager of the corporation of Londoners, known by the name of 'The Society of the New Plantation in Ulster.' Their best blood is derived from the marriage of Sir Marcus Beresford, in 1717, with the heiress of the Le Poers, Earls of Tyrone. The Irish possessions of the Courtenays were accumulated by Sir William Courtenay, one of the 'undertakers' of 1585, whom the family records piously denominate 'the Great.'[1] Sir Valentine Browne, the ancestor of the Earls of Kenmare, was an 'undertaker' at the same epoch, and made an equally good thing of it: although his grandson petitioned the Crown for a reduction of the reserved rent of 113*l.* 6*s.* 8*d.*, on the ground that the lands lay in 'the most barren and remote parts of Kerry,' namely, in and about the Killarney district, the whole of which belongs to Lord Kenmare and Mr. Herbert of Mucross.

The exorbitant pretensions of the Welsh to ancient birth are ill sustained by proofs; and the lack of written records, or even of plausible traditions, has frequently compelled their genealogists to resort to mere fable when they try to carry a pedigree back beyond the sixteenth century. That of the Mostyns of Mostyn, preserved amongst their archives for more than three hundred years, is inscribed on illuminated parchment, and measures more than seventy feet long by about a foot broad. It begins with Noah, and after passing through most of the princely houses mentioned in the Old Testament, is made to flow through sundry royal and imperial channels, till it

[1] If Fielding had been well read in genealogical history, the frequent occurrence of this term might have given a hint for an additional touch or two to the character of Jonathan Wild the Great.

reaches Edward III., where it stops; so that it would fit any family claiming descent from the Plantagenets. Equally superfluous was it for Sir Bernard Burke to track the Tudors through the dark, unwritten periods of Welsh history, by way of prefatory ornament to the genealogy of a distinguished man of letters, whose position, acquired and hereditary, needed no adventitious aid. If Lord Lytton's ancestor married a genuine Tudor, we can dispense with her descent from Welsh princes with unpronounceable names in the sixth century.[1]

'Ancient lineage!' said Mr. Millbank; 'I never heard of a peer with an ancient lineage. The real old families of this country are to be found among the peasantry: the gentry, too, may lay some claim to old blood. I can point you out Saxon families in this county who can trace their pedigrees beyond the Conquest; I know of some Norman gentlemen whose fathers undoubtedly came over with the Conqueror. But a peer with an ancient lineage is to me quite a novelty. No, no; the thirty years of the wars of the Roses freed us from those gentlemen. I take it, after the battle of Tewkesbury, a Norman baron was almost as rare a being in England as a wolf is now.'

'I have always understood,' said Coningsby, 'that our peerage was the finest in Europe.'

'From themselves,' said Millbank, 'and the heralds they pay to paint their carriages. But I go to facts. When Henry VII. called his first Parliament, there were only twenty-nine temporal peers to be found, and even some of them took their seats illegally, for they had been attainted. Of those twenty-nine not five remain; and they, as the Howards, for instance, are not Norman nobility. We owe the English peerage to three sources: the spoliation of the Church; the open and flagrant sale of its honours by the elder Stuarts; and the borough-mongering of our own times.

[1] See Burke's 'Peerage and Baronetage,'—title, Lytton. Strange to say, Sir G. Cornewall Lewis, who had thrown over three or four hundred years of early Roman history without compunction, grew positively angry on my telling him that the pedigree of the Lewises, of Harpton Court, could not be carried higher than the sixteenth century.

Those are the three main sources of the existing peerage of England, and in my opinion disgraceful ones.'

Mr. Bentham and his disciples were also wont to take for granted that the nobility and gentry of the United Kingdom are a mushroom race as compared with the Continental nobility, and to complain that, if the people were to be over-ridden or kept down by blood, they might reasonably insist upon the best. If this be their main grievance, they may take comfort, for the British empire is rather above than below the average of European communities in this respect; and the alleged superiority of the Continental aristocracies vanishes or diminishes apace when we apply to them the same critical tests to which we habitually subject our own. It is a matter of indifference to us whether we adopt or throw aside tradition. In either case we are a match for them. But the contest must be carried on with equal arms; and we shall not feel called on to admit that the Talleyrands descend from the Comtes de Périgord, or the Chateaubriands from the sovereign princes of Auvergne, unless it be simultaneously conceded that the Nevilles descend from Weltheof, Earl of Northumberland, in 969, and the Drummonds from Attila. A Chalmers or a Nicholas would make wild work with the *pièces justificatives* of a French, German, or Spanish genealogist; and Gibbon excepts no nation when he says:

'The proudest families are content to lose, in the darkness of the middle ages, the tree of their pedigree, which, however deep and lofty, must ultimately rise from a plebeian root; and their historians must descend ten centuries below the Christian æra before they can ascertain any lineal succession by the evidence of surnames, of arms, and of authentic records.'

This passage occurs in his 'Digression on the Family of Courtenay,' appended to Chapter LI. of his 'History;' and of this family, which has filled an imperial

throne and intermarried with royal houses, 'the primitive record (he states) is a passage of the continuation of Armoin, a monk of Fleury, who wrote in the twelfth century.' As to the English branch, 'it is certain at least that Henry II. distinguished in his camps and councils *a* Reginald of the name and arms, and it may be fairly presumed of the genuine race, of the Courtenays of France.'

The ducal family of Levis, in France, boasted that they were descended from the princes of Judah, and were wont to produce a very old painting representing one of their ancestors bowing, hat in hand, to the Virgin, who says, '*Couvrez vous, mon cousin.*' The house of Croy possessed a pendant to it, depicting Noah with one foot in the Ark, exclaiming: '*Sauvez les papiers de la maison de Croy.*' The head of another French house is reported to have said in answer to a threatening remonstrance from his spiritual adviser, '*Le bon Dieu n'aura jamais le cœur de damner un Clermont-Tonnerre.*'

The pretensions of the Montmorencys are well known. But there being no proof of the existence of a Seigneur de Montmorency before the middle of the tenth century, the descent of this family from the first Christian baron is untenable, if intelligible: whether they contend that their ancestor was the first Christian who was made a baron, or the first baron who became a Christian. The most plausible interpretation is, that he was the first known baron or seigneur *de la Chrétienté*—that is, of a district so called. The analogous title of Dean of Christianity was not uncommon in the Church. The title of first Baron of France is explained to mean of the Isle of France, where the township from which the Montmorencys derive their name is situate.[1]

Sir Bernard Burke states that the direct male line of

[1] 'L'Art de Vérifier les Dates,' &c. vol. ii. p. 643.

the Montmorencys ended in Henri, Duc de Montmorency, Marshal of France, who was beheaded at Toulouse in 1632.[1] But who then are the Montmorencys of whom we have since heard so often and so much? Who is the Duc de Montmorency mentioned in the Almanach de Gotha of this year? Who was Mathieu de Montmorency, the friend of Madame Recamier and Madame de Stäel?

The pride of a French noble is to descend from one of the petty sovereigns, dukes, counts, or princes who once divided and distracted the kingdom. The Ducs de Gramont retained their legal rights in Bidache and Barnache till 1789. The illustration most coveted is a crusading ancestor; and in the 'Annuaire de la Noblesse' there is a fair sprinkling of names to which this distinction is attached.[2] But the editor states that of the seventy-four crusaders who accompanied Godfrey de Bouillon in 1096, and whose shields may be seen at Versailles, only two, Montmorency and d'Aubusson, are now represented in the male line.

'Of all the families now extant,' wrote Gibbon, 'the most ancient doubtless, and the most illustrious, is the house of France, which has occupied the same throne above one thousand years, and descends in a clear and lineal descent of males from the middle of the ninth century.' What an example of vicissitude it presents, and what alternations of fortune may be yet in store for it! The want of a peerage blending imperceptibly with the people, and carrying weight by inherited wealth and public services as well as by birth, was one

[1] 'The Rise of Great Families, Other Essays and Stories.' London, 1873. A book, like all by the same author, full of curious and interesting matter.

[2] See 'Annuaire de la Noblesse de France;' publié par M. Borel d'Hauterive. 'Histoire Généalogique et Héraldique des Pairs de France,' &c. &c.; par M. le Chevalier de Courcelles. Paris, 1822–1833; 12 vols. quarto. 'Histoire Généalogique et Chronlogique,' &c. &c.; par J. P. Anselme; third edition; 9 vols. folio. Paris, 1726. More than 600 volumes, relating to the French nobility, were destroyed in 1792.

main cause of its fall, and will prove, we fear, the grand obstacle to its durable restoration: for if our neighbours have been annually getting farther from liberty, they have certainly done their best to supply or find compensation in equality. In the meantime personal vanity finds its gratification in an assumption of names and titles, which makes confusion worse confounded whenever an attempt is made to test the accuracy of the 'Annuaire Nobiliaire,' or to compute how many historic families still survive out of the two hundred to which, according to Madame de Stäel, they were reduced before the revolutionary hurricane swept over them. In her 'Considerations on the French Revolution,' she says:—

'The nation would willingly have submitted to the pre-eminence of the historic families, and I do not exaggerate in affirming that there are not more than two hundred in France. But the hundred thousand nobles and the hundred thousand priests who wished to enjoy privileges on a footing of equality with those of MM. de Montmorenci, de Gramont, de Crillon, &c., disgusted generally.'

The depreciated sort of nobility to which she alludes was acquired either by letters of nobility or by holding certain offices, like secrétaire du roi, which were constantly for sale. Twenty-five years of nobility qualified for the Chamber of Nobles.

The order of nobility was revived by Napoleon in 1808, but he appears to have limited his new creations to the titles of duke, count, and baron. We have discovered no marquises or viscounts amongst his new nobles. The hereditary quality of the peerage was destroyed in 1831, and titular nobility was again proscribed in 1848. It has revived with the Empire, and the existing law of France recognises and protects a property in names and arms. A section of the 'Annuaire' is devoted to the *Jurisprudence Nobiliaire* of the year; and amongst the reported cases for 1859

are a suit by the Duc de Montbazon to prohibit the unauthorised assumption of the titles of the house of Rohan, and one by the Countess de Chateaurenard and her two sons to compel the suppression of the passages in a family history published by the Vicomte de Valori, in which he disputed their title to their name. The decision was, that the passages should be suppressed, and that the judgment of the court should be inserted in seven journals at the expense of the author.

Another numerous class of cases has arisen from a practice which may be illustrated by what happened to the Marquis de St. Cyr during the Reign of Terror. On his giving in his name and title to the Secretary of the Section, the following dialogue ensued:—*Sec.* 'Marquis de St. Cyr? Il n'y a plus de Marquis.' *Marq.* 'Bien—de St. Cyr.' *Sec.* 'Il n'y a plus de *de*.' *Marq.* 'St. Cyr, donc.' *Sec.* 'Il n'y a plus de Saints.' *Marq.* 'Allons—mettez Cyr tout court.' *Sec.* 'Citoyen, il n'y a plus de Cyrs (Sires); nous avons décapité le tyran.' Many who were not so unfortunate as to lose the whole of their names were compelled to drop a portion of them. Thus M. Prouveur de Pont, born in 1794, having been baptized without the de Pont from prudential motives, was formally authorised to resume it by a decree of the civil tribunal of Metz in 1859. It is only very recently that this branch of jurisprudence has been in active operation; and it remains to be seen whether it can be strictly applied in a country where it has been from time immemorial the custom to change names. 'Replace,' exclaims the editor of the 'Annuaire,' 'the names of Voltaire, Beaumarchais, and d'Alembert, by those of Arouet, Caron, and Lerond, would you have done more than create a mischievous and melancholy confusion?' Sundry manors, or '*terres*,' used to fetch a high price on account of the euphonic titles that passed with them.

If the principal Roman nobles could establish their

pretended descent from the patricians of the Republic, they might boast the best genealogies in the world. But speaking of them as a class in the fourteenth century, Gibbon says :—

'In origin and affection they were aliens to their country; and a genuine Roman, could such have been produced, might have renounced these haughty strangers, who disdained the appellation of citizens, and proudly styled themselves the princes of Rome. After a dark series of revolutions, all records of pedigree were lost; the distinction of surnames was abolished; the blood of the nations was mingled in a thousand channels; and the Goths and Lombards, the Greeks and Franks, the Germans and Normans, had obtained the fairest possessions by royal bounty, or the prerogative of valour.'

The chief authority for this statement is Muratori; and Petrarch, apostrophizing the Roman people in his celebrated letter to Rienzi, exclaims, 'Your masters are foreign adventurers. Examine well their origin. You will find that the valley of Spoleto, the Rhine, the Rhone, and some corner of the earth ignobler still, has bestowed them on you.' The Ursini, or Orsini, were said to have migrated from Spoleto in the twelfth century; and the Colonnas, whose first historical appearance was in 1104, admitted that they came from the banks of the Rhine, which their flatterers endeavoured to reconcile with an alleged Roman origin by the hypothesis that a cousin of Nero, who escaped from the city and founded Mayence, was their progenitor. In the Colonna Gallery at Rome is a picture of the Resurrection, in which the most distinguished members of the family, male and female, are represented rising from their coffins assisted by angels, and occupying the exclusive attention of the two first Persons of the Trinity.

The claim of the Massimi to descend from Fabius Maximus rests solely on the name; and the Anni-

baldi, we agree with Gibbon, 'must have been very ignorant, or very modest, if they had not descended from the Carthaginian hero.' So must the Giustiniani, if they had not descended from Justinian. With equal plausibility, the pedigree of the English de Veres began with Lucius Verus: there is a family in Prussian Poland, named Scipio, who are traditionally carried up to Scipio Africanus; and a Welsh family, named Williams, claim Anchises for an ancestor. 'In the year of our Lord 390 (says Jacob) we find Caius Actius residing in the old Castle of Este, in the dukedom of Venice, in Italy; from whom, *with the utmost historical certainty*, we arrive at our present gracious Sovereign, without the least interruption in the succession.' He adds that Caius Actius was descended from a Roman patrician who was a contemporary of Tarquin.

The Venetian nobles, all of whom were inscribed in the Golden Book, were of four classes, and of very unequal rank—the lowest being the descendants of those who had purchased their nobility. The highest—*Gli Elettorali*—were the descendants of the twelve persons by whom the first Doge was elected in 697 A.D., and of the four who, in conjunction with the representatives of these twelve, signed an instrument for the foundation of the Abbey of San Georgio Maggiore in 800. The twelve are sometimes spoken of as the Twelve Apostles, and the four as the Four Evangelists. The twelve were Badonari, Barozzi, Contarini, Dandoli, Falieri, Gradenighi, Memmi otherwise Monegari, Michielli, Morosini, Polani, Sanudi otherwise Candiani, Thiepoli. The four were Bembi, Bragadini, Cornari, Giustiniani. Six other families have been admitted without cavil to the first class: Delfini, Querini, Sagredi, Soranzi, Zeni, Zeniani.[1]

[1] 'Sketches of Venetian History.' Murray's Family Library, ch. v. Disputes about precedence, which might disunite the privileged order, were discountenanced by the State. One of the Da Ponti family, in a

Only two of these are mentioned by Count Litta: the Candiani, who became extinct in the eleventh century, and the Giustiniani, the last of whom died in 1784. From his notices of the Strozzi and Medici, the greatest of the Florentine houses, it would appear that branches of them exist still. There is a branch of the Medici at Naples, and two of the Strozzi are or recently were in the Austrian service. The Strozzi, who claimed to descend from a Roman proconsul, were not known before the middle of the thirteenth century, and the founder of the Medici was elected gonfaloniere in 1295, when the nobles were excluded from the magistracy. This fact rather favours that theory of their origin which is based on the name and the balls in their shield. The Alighieri became extinct in 1558. The immortal poet who gave lustre to the family was thoroughly persuaded of his descent from one of the ancient Roman families which at the fall of the Empire took refuge in Florence; but the name first occurs in 1019. The families of Ariosto and Bentivoglio, both of Bologna and both of respectable antiquity, are also extinct. The Pepoli are represented by the poet and patriot, lately resident in England. The Duke de Sforza is married to an Englishwoman, whose story is recorded in Burke's 'Anecdotes of the Aristocracy.' The father of the first Duke of Milan, of this family, was, towards the end of the fourteenth century, a soldier of fortune, who had begun life as a peasant. When asked to join a band of free-lances, he flung his axe (Burke says, 'spade,') into a tree, and said he would enlist, if it did not come down again. The axe stuck fast, and his military career began.

dispute with a Canale, having boasted that the Ponti (bridges) were above the Canali (canals), it was retorted that the Canali existed before the Ponti. The Council of Ten stopped the controversy by suggesting that *they* could fill up the canals and knock down the bridges. There is a Venetian family of distinction named Coglioni with armorial bearings corresponding with the name.

Count Litta's magnificent work (*Famiglie Celebri Italiane*)[1] consists already of eleven folio volumes, and he has omitted many families who are entitled to a place in it. He seldom errs on the side of credulity; but he troubles himself very little about ancient pedigrees, and commonly allows the merit of antiquity to a family, provided its name occurs in the early annals of a State. By a parity of reasoning, we could carry back hundreds of English families to the Conquest; and the O'Neills or O'Briens would rival or transcend the best names that figure in the Golden Book of Venice. This must be kept in mind in estimating the pretensions of the Spanish nobles, who, with the exception of a few grandees of the first class, would be a good deal puzzled if required to prove their pedigrees step by step, without a single intervention of the bar sinister, or (what they dread still more) without the slightest taint of African, Indian, or Jewish blood. The genuine blue blood, which should be unmixed Gothic and of indefinite antiquity, is rarely to be found except in the mountainous districts to which the Iberian population retired before the invading Moors. The Biscayans are the Welsh of the Spanish peninsula, and their pedigrees strongly resemble that of Cumberland's hero, John de Lancaster, who made nothing of an odd century or two before the Christian æra.

There was a period when the Spanish Jews enjoyed a large amount of political and social influence, and many an impoverished Hidalgo, yielding to the united force of power and wealth, was not sorry to form an alliance with the objects of his ill-suppressed hate. Blanco White says that so many of these mixed marriages are set down in a manuscript work, widely circulated, as fully to justify its ominous title of 'The Brand of Spain.' The same writer mentions a curious illustration of the marked division into noble and ple-

[1] There is a copy in the library of the Athenæum Club.

beian families. A common robber, apprehended with three others, was declared noble by his relatives, who demanded that he should be allowed the full privileges of his class, offering at the same time to defray the incidental cost. Instead of being hanged with his accomplices, he was strangled by the *garrote* on a scaffold hung with black, and a certificate of the fact was delivered to the family to be preserved amongst their archives as a proof of their nobility.[1]

A grandee of the first class is privileged to remain covered before the sovereign. A grandeeship, or any number of grandeeships, may be inherited without merger, through males or females, by a grandee. Hence the phrase of a noble's having so many hats, *i. e.* so many rights to put on his hat in the presence of royalty. Seignories, titles, honorary charges, and proprietary rights of all sorts, descend and accumulate in the same fashion; so that, on the tontine principle, and taking into account the in-and-in marriages of the Spanish nobles, it is within the range of possibility for all the hats to be piled upon one head, or for all the rightful inheritors of the most sonorous appellations to be carried in a coach. The Duc d'Ossuna could not be deferentially addressed in a dedication within the compass of one of our pages, and his possessions are so extensive that, as we heard one of his friends assert, he has robbers of his own, or, in other words, robbers settled on his territory, who in return for his enforced or involuntary hospitality allow him and his visitors to pass toll-free.

The habit of marrying *in-and-in*, as it has been called, that is, of intermarrying exclusively with families of their own degree, commonly nearly related, is supposed to have brought about the degeneracy, moral

[1] Doblado's 'Letters.' See also 'Quarterly Review,' vol. lvii, p. 69 *et seq.* More than a hundred years ago, it was computed that Spain had produced 700 works on genealogy and heraldry.

and physical, of the highest Spanish nobility. The late Lord Clarendon used to relate that, on his first arrival as British minister at Madrid, a grandee of the first class, on paying an official visit, addressed him thus: '*Votre Excellence ne connoit pas les Grands d'Espagne? Eh bien: je me pose en modèle. Je suis petit, pauvre, bossu, et cocu.*'

A French nobleman of the time of Louis XV., accounted for his own diminutive size on an opposite and (it is conceived) untenable theory. Pointing to the tall, well-made lacqueys in the ante-chamber, he said: *Les ingrats! Voilà comme nous les faisons et comme ils nous font!* The Duc d'Ossuna, it should be observed, has taken the best method of freshening his ancestral current of blue blood without diluting it, by marrying a Princess Salm, one of the most beautiful and accomplished women of the day.

The 'Almanach de Gotha' professes to include all the Continental nobility of the first class, especially those descended from any of the mediatised German houses, or otherwise entitled to be deemed princely or illustrious; such as the Princes de Ligne, the D'Arembergs, the Dalbergs, the Metternichs, the Waldsteins or Wallensteins, the Schwarzenburgs, the Lichtensteins, the Trautmandorffs, the Esterhazys, the Bathyanis, the Palffys, the Pückler-Muskaus, the Lievens, the Poniatowskys, the Lobomerskys, the Chimays, the Corsinis, the Dorias Pamphilis, the Belgiosos, the Tremouilles, the Gramonts, the Noailles, the Rohan-Chabots, the Polignacs, the Torlonias. We select these on account of their historic, diplomatic, or social notoriety; not (as may be inferred from the last) because they are the most ancient. Indeed many of the more obscure Teutonic families produce better pedigrees than the Metternichs or Schwarzenburgs. But when we reject presumption and require proof, we find the best of them lost about the same time, in the same

mists of uncertainty, with our Nevilles, Stanleys, Berkeleys, Courtenays, Drummonds, Percivals, Herberts, Howards, Fitzgeralds, and Douglasses.[1]

As regards quarters, the Continental nobility derive an obvious advantage from the clear line of demarkation drawn between them and the non-noble classes. There can seldom be much difficulty in testing the right of a Comtesse de —— or a Fräulein von —— to armorial bearings; whilst the occurrence of plain Miss or Mrs. —— on the sixth or seventh step of the ascending scale may prove an insurmountable bar. Social position is more or less affected by the same cause. Sir James Lawrence, Knight of Malta, has written a book to prove that gentility is better than nobility, inasmuch as it does not depend on titles nor on anything that monarchs can confer. *Nascitur generosus: fit nobilis*, is the maxim which he adopts and strengthens by an accumulation of authorities. The touchstone of a gentleman is his right to bear coat armour. This is still the meaning of the French term *gentilhomme*, and a contempt for mere title is expressed in the device of the de Coucys:—

'Je suis ni duc ni prince aussi,
Je suis le seigneur de Coucy.'

The distinction between peers and commoners, or what Sir James Lawrence would call the titled and untitled nobility in the United Kingdom, is exclusively political; and the multiplicity of titles on the Continent ought not to deprive an Englishman of his relative rank. If a Howard of Corby, a Herbert of Muckross, or a Cameron of Lochiel, did not become an esquire by being named in the commission of the peace or elected a member of Parliament, he would have no precedence whatever, and an ordinary bar-

[1] See the 'Historisch-Genealogischer Atlas' of Dr. Karl Hopf, of which the first part, including Germany, appeared in 1858. See also the learned work of Spenerus, 'Historia Insignium Illustrium,' &c. &c.

rister might walk out of a room before him.[1] It was computed by a statistical writer of authority in 1845 that there were in Russia 500,000 nobles; in Austria 239,000; in Spain (in 1780) 470,000; in France, prior to 1790, 360,000, of whom 4120 belonged to the ancienne noblesse; in England, Scotland, and Ireland, at the period when he wrote, only 1631 persons, from dukes to baronets, possessing transmissible titles.[2] An English traveller in North Germany says that at one of the inns he had a graf (count) for landlord, a gräfin (countess) for landlady; the places of ostler, waiter, and boots being filled by the young counts, and those of cook and chambermaid by the young countesses. The barber who shaved him at the same place was a baron.[3] To titular Russian and Italian princes might be applied what Sir Thomas Smith said of gentlemen in this country, that 'they may be made good cheap.'

Let it not be supposed from our referring to this distinction that we see cause to envy the Continental multiplicity of titles and decorations. The advantage of the English system far more than counterbalances its disadvantages; and to reconcile the Continental custom, of conferring titles heritable by all the children, with our form of Constitution, would be an impossibility. The sole laxity in our laws or practice there may be reason to regret is the impunity with which names and armorial bearings may be assumed. The 'Commercial Directory' of London alone contains thirteen Percys, twenty-one Talbots, thirty Seymours, forty-eight Herberts, and one hundred and ten Howards. The prevalent belief is that any new man may get any

[1] Precedence is a large subject in itself. The only reliable set of rules is one compiled for her Majesty by the late Sir Charles Young, Garter King at Arms. A few copies, with notes, have been printed for private circulation.

[2] 'Statistique Morale et Physique,' &c. &c. By the Chevalier F. de Tapiès.

[3] 'Germany in 1831.' By John Strang. London, 1836.

crest and coat of arms at the Heralds' College. This, we are assured, is not the fact; and the high character of the principal members of the College is a guarantee for the conscientious performance of their remaining duties. But they cannot be expected to incur extra trouble or expense in detecting flaws in pedigrees brought to be registered; and their powers are no longer adequate to check any bold usurper of family honours who may think proper to set up an escutcheoned carriage without consulting them.

A curious case, in which an ancestor of Earl Delawarr was the prosecutor, is reported in Rushforth's 'Historical Collections,' as having occurred in the reign of Charles II. :—

'A person of a far different name by birth, and but an ostler, having by his skill in wrestling, in Lincoln's Inn Fields, got the name of "Jack of the West," coming afterwards to be an innkeeper, and getting a good estate, assumes the name of West, and the arms of the family of the Lord Delawarr, and gets from the Heralds his pedigree, drawn through three or four generations, from the fourth son of one of the Lords Delawarr; and his son, whom he bred at the Inns of Court, presuming upon this pedigree to take place of some gentlemen, his neighbours in Hampshire, they procured him to be cited by the Lord Delawarr in this Court (the Court of Honour or Lord Marshal's Court), where, at the hearing, he produced his patent from the Heralds. But it so fell out that an ancient gentleman of the name of West, and family of Delawarr, and named in the pedigree, who had been long beyond the sea and conceived to be dead, and now newly returned, whose son, as it seems, this young spark would have had his father to have been, appeared in Court at the hearing, which dashed the whole business; and the pretended West, the defendant, was fined 500*l.*, ordered to be degraded, and never more to write himself gentleman.'

The law remains unaltered, but there is no longer any method of enforcing it. Before assuming (or resuming) the name of Herbert, Mr. Jones, of Lanarth,

notified his intention to Sidney (the late Lord) Herbert, who replied that he had no objection, provided the rest of the Joneses did not do the same. The noblest names, however, can now be taken with impunity; and even the form of applying for the royal licence is no longer deemed indispensable.

The Heralds were wont to make circuits from time to time and hold Visitations, at which the neighbouring gentry were invited or summoned to attend. The proved pedigrees were duly entered, and at the end of each book is commonly a list of persons who 'disclaim all pretention to arms or gentry.' The last Visitation was held in 1687. The last attempt to revive the Court of Chivalry was in 1737. It failed for want of a Lord High Constable of England, who is an indispensable element; but we have heard that, when O'Keefe, the dramatist, quartered the royal arms of Ireland, the Irish Heralds stopped his carriage in the streets of Dublin and erased the emblazonment. A similar attempt in Edinburgh, at the instance of a Duke of Athol, resulted in the triumph of the alleged pretender, an ex-linendraper, who obtained large damages.

We are wont to fancy that our own is pre-eminently an age of movement and transition, that fortunes change hands more rapidly than at any preceding epoch, and that the old landed aristocracy, retreating before the fortunate sons of commerce or speculation, like the Red Indians before the white men, are in a fair way to be gradually 'improved off the face of the earth.' Yet a calm analysis of the springs or causes of the aggrandisement or decline of families at different periods does not bear out the theory. The extinction or impoverishment of most of the old stocks may be traced to three causes, namely, natural decay, personal improvidence, or civil war—the last of which has happily become inoperative. The sudden rise of new men was also long

principally owing to that unsettled state of things which enabled sovereigns to endow favourites with princely revenues, or permitted ministers of state to found earldoms, marquisates, or dukedoms out of their official perquisites.

Under the Plantagenets, the process was rude enough. The transfer of a title and estate from an opponent to a partisan was a matter of pure force or a high-handed exertion of prerogative. Might made Right. Thus, when the seventh Earl de Warrenne in common with other nobles was required by Edward I. to produce his titles, he brought out an old rusty sword which had belonged to the first earl, and said, 'By this instrument do I hold my lands, and by the same I intend to defend them.' His title was no longer contested; but on the death of his grandson, the eighth earl, the earldom and entire property were confiscated by Edward III. The destructive effect of confiscations and attainders on the highest order of nobility is proved by the fact that in 1626, the year of Bassompierre's mission, there was only one English duke (Buckingham) and one Scotch duke (Lenox).[1]

Under the Tudors, the plunder of the monasteries enabled the monarch to found or aggrandise families without impoverishing the Crown. But Lord Burleigh was the first statesman who obtained great wealth without public scandal. His style of living was on the most magnificent scale. He built three fine houses, and maintained four establishments. He entertained the Queen twelve several times at the average cost of 3000*l.* a time, and left a large fortune to his heirs, having begun life as a briefless barrister at Gray's Inn.

The largest fortune accumulated under the Stuarts from public sources was that of Villiers, Duke of

[1] 'Memoirs of the Embassy of the Marshal de Bassompierre to the Court of England in 1626.' Translated, with notes, by the Right. Hon. J. W. Croker, 1819, p. 42.

Buckingham, estimated at 30,000*l.* a year, equal to three times that amount now. The illegitimate sons of Charles II., also, received princely appanages. The practice of bestowing Crown property on subjects, far from being abandoned at the Revolution, was occasionally pushed to an extent that provoked parliamentary interference, even when the objects of the royal bounty were selected for their merits or services. When, in addition to other large donations, William III., in 1695, ordered the Lords of the Treasury to make out a warrant granting his friend, Portland, some valuable manors and royalties in Denbighshire, the murmurs were such as to compel him to give up the intention.[1]

Not long afterwards the hereditary domains of the Crown ceased to be alienable; but till past the middle of the eighteenth century the salaries and perquisites of numerous offices left grasping courtiers and rising politicians no reason for complaint. Thus it is related by Macaulay of Montague, the founder of the dukedom of Manchester, that, when he was a peer with 12,000*l.* a year, when his villa on the Thames was regarded as the most delightful of all suburban retreats, when he was said to revel in Tokay from the imperial cellar, and in soups made out of birds'-nests brought from the Indian Ocean, and costing three guineas apiece,—'his enemies were fond of reminding him that there had been a time when he had eked out by his wits an income of barely 50*l.*: when he had been happy with a trencher of mutton-chops and a flagon of ale from the college buttery, and when a tithe-pig was the rarest luxury for which he had dared to hope.'

Speaking of the last days of Queen Anne, Lord

[1] When Somers was created a Peer, in 1757, he had a grant of the manors of Reigate and Howleigh, in Surrey, and 2100*l.* a year out of the fee-farm rents of the Crown.

Stanhope says that 'the service of the country was then a service of vast emolument;' and, instancing the Duke and Duchess of Marlborough, he states that, exclusive of Blenheim, of parliamentary grants, of gifts, of marriage portions from the Queen to their daughters, the fixed yearly income of the Duke, at the height of his favour, was no less than 54,825*l.*, and that the Duchess had, in offices and pensions, an additional sum of 9500*l.* This is a moderate estimate; Lord Dartmouth, in a note on Burnet, computes their joint salaries at 90,000*l.* When Sir Robert Walpole became Prime Minister, his paternal estate was computed at less than 3000*l.* a year. During his tenure of office he lived magnificently: he laid out enormous sums (popularly computed at 150,000*l.*) in buildings and pictures; and he more than quadrupled his private income, besides providing for his sons by patent places to the tune of 14,000*l.* a year between them. We shall not much mend the matter by accepting Archdeacon Cox's palliation, that Sir Robert had been a large gainer from the South Sea bubble.

In the times of which we speak, every functionary who had to receive or pay over money was deemed entitled to a handsome per-centage; and if it remained any time in his custody, he was tacitly permitted to employ it for his own personal advantage. When England, besides keeping up a large fleet and army, was liberally subsidising foreign princes, the profits of paymasters and treasurers were immense; and the first Lord Holland availed himself of his opportunities as Paymaster of the Forces without scruple or remorse. His rival, the great commoner, when he held the same office, proudly declined to receive a sixpence beyond the regular salary; and his example has been followed by the three last generations of English statesmen, pre-eminently by his illustrious son, who is one amongst many instances that, so far

as pecuniary considerations are concerned, a political career in this country has become one of the least tempting a man of talent can adopt. The Bar, too, is beginning to elevate without enriching; and the majority of lawyers recently ennobled are far poorer than their predecessors. Literature, as yet, has only helped to found two peerages (Macaulay and Lytton), but it is rapidly rising to the rank of a well-remunerated as well as honourable vocation, and the time may come when the works of a popular author may support a title as well as Blenheim or Strathfieldsaye.

'In the investigation of past events (says Gibbon in his Autobiography) our curiosity is stimulated by the immediate or indirect reference to ourselves; but in the estimate of honour we should learn to value the gifts of nature above those of fortune; to esteem in our ancestors the qualities that best promote the interests of society; and to pronounce the descendant of a king less truly noble than the offspring of a man of genius, whose writings will instruct or delight the latest posterity. The family of Confucius is, in my opinion, the most illustrious in the world. After a painful ascent of eight or ten centuries, our barons and princes of Europe are lost in the darkness of the middle ages; but, in the vast equality of the empire of China, the posterity of Confucius have maintained, above 2200 years, their peaceful honours and perpetual succession. The chief of the family is still revered by the sovereign and the people, as the living image of the wisest of mankind.

'The nobility of the Spencers has been illustrated and enriched by the trophies of Marlborough; but I exhort them to consider the "Fairy Queen"[1] as the most precious jewel of their coronet.

'Our immortal Fielding was of the younger branch of the Earls of Denbigh, who drew their origin from the Counts of Habsburg, the lineal descendants of Eltrico, in the seventh century, Duke of Alsace. Far different have been the for-

[1] 'Nor less praiseworthy are the ladies three,
The honour of that noble familie,
Of which I meanest boast myself to be.'
Spencer, Colin Clout, &c. v. 538.

tunes of the English and German divisions of the family of Habsburg: the former, the knights and sheriffs of Leicestershire, have slowly risen to the dignity of a peerage: the latter, the Emperors of Germany and Kings of Spain, have threatened the liberty of the Old, and invaded the treasures of the New, World. The successors of Charles the Fifth may disdain their brethren of England; but the romance of "Tom Jones," that exquisite picture of human manners, will outlive the palace of the Escurial and the imperial eagle of the house of Austria.'

As for science, it seems her destiny to invent and discover on the *sic vos non vobis* principle. Of the five or six remarkable men who brought unquestioned originality of mind to bear on the cotton-manufacture, only one (Arkwright) received his reward in wealth. Of the many who co-operated in maturing the invention of the steam-engine, Watt alone derived even a moderate fortune from its wonder-working capabilities. The electric telegraph has not made Professor Wheatstone a millionaire; and whoever may have first alighted on the gold-fields of Australia, it is clear that no estate in this land of promise, nor share of its produce, has been assigned to any of the alleged discoverers, although we have heard that a Colonial minister offered Sir E. de Strzelecki to call the auriferous district by his name. In the meantime, enormous fortunes are rapidly accumulating, the results of energy and enterprise, in many walks of life besides gold-digging, and the lucky possessors may soon be bidding for the mansions of the decayed gentry, like the flight of Nabobs who followed in the wake of Clive and Hastings.

It must be admitted, however, that the development of commerce and industry has proportionally strengthened the position of the proprietary class by adding incalculably to the value of their land. The accession of income accruing to the Bedford, Portland, Grosvenor, Portman, and Berkeley estates in and about the metropolis may be taken as a sample of what is

going on in other rich and populous neighbourhoods; whilst the revenues of many lordly owners of mines have simultaneously increased. On the whole, therefore, we see no reason to fear that any sweeping or revolutionary change in the well-ordered social system of the United Kingdom is at hand; and the effect on our minds of this review of the vicissitudes of families, especially in their political bearings, is rather reassuring than the contrary.

LIVES OF THE LORD CHANCELLORS OF IRELAND.

The Lives of the Lord Chancellors and Keepers of the Great Seal of Ireland, from the Earliest Times to the Reign of Queen Victoria. By J. RODERICK O'FLANAGAN, M.R.I.A., Barrister-at-Law, Author of 'Recollections of the Irish Bar,' the 'Bar Life of O'Connell,' &c. In two volumes. London: 1870.

IT has been wittily said that bad books make good reviews, as bad wine makes good vinegar. If this were true, the critics ought to be grateful to Mr. O'Flanagan for the opportunity afforded them by his 'Lives of the Lord Chancellors of Ireland.' It is a bad book, although with judicious correction and curtailment it may eventually take rank as a useful compilation. Notwithstanding the amount of anxious labour bestowed upon the composition, we cannot say *materiam superabat opus*; for the conception is better than the execution, and the materials rise superior to the arrangement and the style.

Till within living memory, owing to political causes, the Irish woolsack was practically reserved for Englishmen. The lives of the Lord Chancellors of Ireland, therefore, are mostly the lives of English lawyers; so that the nicest discrimination was required in selecting such portions as relate to their judicial career in Ireland, and compressing or rapidly glancing over the rest. Not marking this peculiarity of his subject, Mr. O'Flanagan has overloaded it with general history, English and Irish. But he is rich in traditions and reminiscences: he is well versed in Irish

Memoirs and Biographies: he is trustworthy, if not always apposite, in his citations; and he blunders honestly when he blunders (which he does very often) in his dates. In a word, despite of its manifold defects, we have found the book capital gleaning ground, and we hope by means of it to illustrate and place in broad relief the most eventful passages of the forensic annals of Ireland—annals forming the brightest pages of her history, the pages of which she has most reason to be proud, almost the only pages which she might write without a blot and read without a tear.

Thomas Moore was wont to relate how, some time after the publication of the first volume of his 'History of Ireland,' a literary lady was kind enough to suggest to him the 'History of Ireland' as an appropriate subject for his pen; and he frankly admitted the suggestion to be a fair test of the limited circulation of his book, which (so far as he had then gone) was exclusively conversant with rude traditions, apocryphal heroes, and mythical events, which read better in poetry than prose. Warned by his example, we shall have nothing to say to personages like Cormac MacArt, monarch of Ireland, A.D. 227, who, we are assured by Mr. O'Flanagan, 'was distinguished for his devotion to literature, and is said to have regained his ancestral throne by his intellectual powers;' nor do we care to meddle in detail with the Chancellors who flourished in the dark ages, from the thirteenth to the sixteenth century, when the office was more political than judicial, and was indiscriminately bestowed on lawyers, churchmen, powerful nobles, and men of the sword. Thus, in 1449, Richard, Duke of York, being appointed Viceroy of Ireland, made his son, Edmund Plantagenet, Earl of Rutland, Lord Chancellor. In 1483 the Great Seal was entrusted to Sir Thomas Fitz Gerald (brother of the Earl of Kildare, Lord Deputy), who, on the civil war breaking out anew, resigned it for the battle-axe,

and fell fighting valiantly in the command of a division at the battle of Stoke. Nicholas, Lord Howth, led the billmen on foot at the well-named battle of Knocktough (hill of slaughter), fought on August 10, 1504, and was appointed Lord Chancellor of Ireland in 1509.

Archiepiscopal Chancellors abounded on each side of the Irish Channel; and we so repeatedly find the Great Seal in the possession of an Archbishop of Dublin, that the dignities seem to have an affinity to each other at these early stages of civil and ecclesiastical administration. One of the most remarkable instances was that of John Alan, Wolsey's chaplain, whom, in 1528, the then all powerful Cardinal made Archbishop and Lord Chancellor at once. This double elevation took place in open defiance of that famous Earl of Kildare of whom so many strange stories are related. One, tolerably well known, that on a Lord of the Council saying—'All Ireland cannot govern that Earl,' the King (Henry VIII.) declared, 'Then that Earl shall govern all Ireland,' and forthwith made him Viceroy. Another, that when he was accused before the same Council of having set fire to a cathedral, he excused himself on the ground that he believed the Archbishop was within it at the time.

And here arises the grave question, whether the Archbishop whom he meant to roast, was or was not the Cardinal's hated nominee. We find that one of Kildare's first acts as Lord Deputy was to take away the Great Seal from Alan, and confer it on the Archbishop of Armagh. It further appears that the feud between Alan and the Fitz Geralds led to his death by violence. During one of their insurrectionary movements against the constituted authorities, after vainly trying to escape to England, he was seized in his bed by a party of the Geraldines, and dragged half-naked before Lord Offaly, the son of his dreaded foe. He fell on his knees and besought the young lord to forget former

injuries and respect his calling. Lord Offaly, meaning to spare him, exclaimed in Irish—'*Beir naim an bodach!*' ('Take away the churl!'), which his followers unfortunately misinterpreted, and immediately beat out the Archbishop's brains.

'The Chancellor,' remarks Mr. O'Flanagan, 'in these primitive days, had very extensive jurisdiction, and a proportionate sphere of duty. Besides presiding in the Court of Chancery, attending Parliament, and assisting the Lord Deputy with his advice; ministering to the wants of his diocese, and the important functions of an archbishop or bishop, he presided as Judge of Assize, and disposed of the business civil and criminal. The absence of the Chancellor in England, in 1380, caused the assizes which were to be holden before him to lapse.'

The mixed character of the office may account for the novel description of duty undertaken by the Lord Chancellor (Trimlestown) in 1537, 'who, with the Archbishop and other members of the council, undertook a converting circuit, which jumbled preaching, hanging, law, and religion, varied by feasting and visiting, in a most extraordinary manner.' Their proceedings at Wexford, as officially reported, may suffice for a specimen:—

'There, the Sunday, my Lord of Dublin preached, having a very great audience, when also were published the King's injunctions. The day following we kept the Sessions there, both for the city and the shire, where was put to execution four felons, accompanied with another, a friar, whom among the residue, we commanded to be hanged in his habit, and so to remain upon the gallows for a mirror to all his brethren to live truly.'

The last of the archiepiscopal Chancellors of Ireland was Boyle, Archbishop of Dublin in 1663 when he received the Great Seal, and Archbishop of Armagh in 1678. He continued in uninterrupted possession of

the office for the unprecedented period of twenty-two years, and it was as an octogenarian, no longer equal to the work, that he was displaced in 1685, on the accession of James II. He was succeeded by Sir Charles Porter, an English lawyer of note, who not complying fast enough with the anti-Protestant requisitions of the new régime, was replaced by Sir Alexander Fitton, one of the numerous victims of Lord Macaulay's rhetorical exaggeration. Describing the sweeping subversion of the Protestant interest in Ireland, he says :—

'The highest offices in the State, in the Army, and in the Courts of Justice were, with scarcely any exception, filled by Papists. A pettifogger named Alexander Fitton, who had been detected in forgery, who had been fined for misconduct by the House of Lords at Westminster, who had been many years in prison, and who was equally deficient in legal knowledge and in the natural good sense and acuteness by which the want of legal knowledge has sometimes been supplied, was Lord Chancellor. His single merit was that he had apostatised from the Protestant religion ; and this merit was thought sufficient to wash out even the stain of his Saxon extraction. He soon proved himself worthy of the confidence of his patrons. On the bench of justice he declared that there was not one heretic in forty thousand who was not a villain. He often, after hearing a cause in which the interests of his Church was concerned, postponed his decision, for the purpose, as he avowed, of consulting his spiritual director, a Spanish priest, well read doubtless in Escobar.'

The appointment of this man was so clearly indefensible that Lord Macaulay might have been content to state the plain truth concerning him. The term 'pettifogger' conveys the impression of a low, mean, and sharp practitioner. Now, it nowhere appears that Fitton, although bred to the bar, ever practised at all, and it was in pushing his claims as the undoubted representative of an old family of knightly rank, that he fell under the imputation of forgery. A document

produced on his behalf in the course of a prolonged litigation with his relative, Lord Brandon, was pronounced spurious; but the evidence was conflicting, and the House of Lords, who (the case not being judicially before them) committed him and his witnesses for contempt, notoriously acted on the instigation of his noble antagonist, under the pretence of upholding the dignity of their order. His real offence in their eyes was the implied reflection on a peer.

The chances are that Fitton knew quite as much of law and equity as the common run of preceding Irish Chancellors, or as Lord Shaftesbury, Lord Chancellor of England in 1672, who had no legal training at all. The 'spiritual director' whom Fitton was wont to consult about his decisions was Dr. Stafford, a Doctor of the Civil Law and a Master in Chancery, who was in high esteem for learning and probity, whether he had or had not been 'a Spanish priest, well read, doubtless, in Escobar.' Fitton, compelled to beat a hasty retreat after the battle of the Boyne, was attainted and fled to France, where he died.

On the forced retreat of Fitton, Sir Charles Porter was reappointed and quitted with reluctance his quiet chambers in the Temple to resume the anxious duties of the post. He seems to have had an instinctive foreknowledge of the trials in store for him, for, having the misfortune to differ with the Viceroy (Lord Capel) touching the Treaty of Limerick, he fell under the ban of the more violent of the dominant party, and articles of impeachment were moved against him by Colonel Ponsonby in the Irish House of Commons, for partiality, corruption, arbitrary proceedings above the law, and (the pith of the whole) favouring Papists against Protestants. A quarrel between the two Houses, touching the attendance of peers as witnesses, offered him a plausible opportunity for evading inquiry; but, conscious of his innocence, he manfully

presented himself at the bar of the Lower House, where (according to the journals) 'being admitted with the purse, a chair being placed for him on the right hand, within the bar, he laid down the purse and his hat, and, at the back of the chair, uncovered, was heard what he could say on the articles exhibited against him.' What he said (of which there is no record) was so much to the purpose that the articles were rejected by a majority of 121 against 77. But the affair was not destined to end here. As he was driving home his coach tried to pass another:—

'This was the coach of Rochfort, Speaker of the House of Commons and Attorney-General, a violent enemy of the Lord Chancellor. A stray glare of light happening to fall upon the Chancellor's equipage, as the two vehicles were nearly in collision, the Speaker instantly called aloud for the Chancellor's coachman to keep back. This peremptory mandate being either unheard or unheeded, *the Speaker, in his robes, darted from his coach, and disregarding danger and dirt, seized hold of the reins of the Chancellor's horses, and brought them on to their haunches.* With a petulance and littleness unworthy such an occasion, he ordered his mace to be produced from his coach, and thrust it before the Chancellor's coachman, declaring "that he would be run down by no man, and would justify what he did."

'The Lord Chancellor, with wise discretion, took no personal part in this street rencontre. He made no attempt to drag his mace through the mire, and was content to allow the Speaker's carriage precedence while their route lay in the same direction.'

It would have been quite in keeping with the manners of the period had the Lord Chancellor called out the Speaker and decided the question of privilege by an exchange of shots; but Porter's English breeding preserved him from the contagion of Irish folly, and he adopted the more reasonable step of complaining to the Lords of the personal affront put upon him and them. They were nowise reluctant to back him up,

and formally demanded an explanation; but all the answer they got was, that 'as the matter was purely accidental, it could not be looked on as a designed affront to their lordships in the person of their Speaker.' It is recorded (by Mr. H. Roscoe in 'Westminster Hall') of a Lord Chancellor of England (Northington), whose state-coach was impeded by a carman, that 'he swore by God, that if he had been in his private coach, he would have got out and beat the d—d rascal to a jelly.'

Porter died of apoplexy on June 15, 1677, and was succeeded by John Methuen, who, though called to the Bar, had diverged into diplomacy, and was actually accredited envoy to Portugal, when, happening to be in London on leave, he was selected to hold the Irish Great Seal. His qualifications, which were rather of the negative sort, are stated in Vernon's letter of recommendation to the Duke of Shrewsbury:—

'It will not be judged fit, I suppose, to take any of the Irish lawyers, both as to the country and the factions they are divided into, and one to be sent from hence should not be merely chosen for his abilities at the bar; and when Sir Charles Porter was sent, I think he might as little have pretended to it as this gentleman, who to his knowledge in the law has added his experience abroad, and his commendable behaviour in the House of Commons.'

He was also, after some short hesitation, taken up by the Lord Chancellor of England, and 'the fact,' remarks Mr. O'Flanagan, 'of Lord Somers recommending Methuen to the King, shows that he considered him well qualified for the office.' It shows, to our mind, that Lord Somers had formed an extremely low estimate of the professional qualifications for the dignity, and the lack of them in this instance proved too glaring to be overlooked. The duties Methuen performed so ill became proportionally irksome to him, and after trifling with them for three or four

years, he gladly accepted his old post of Envoy to Portugal, which was opportunely placed at his disposal. The Methuen Treaty, which Mr. O'Flanagan tells us was made by the ex-Chancellor and kicked about the room by the King of Portugal in 1701, was made by his son Paul, and is dated December 27, 1703.

Hardly any of the early Chancellors of Ireland who rose above the common level, or followed an independent course, escaped an impeachment or a vote of censure by one or other of the two Houses; and Sir Constantine Phipps (the ancestor of the Marquis of Normanby) must be considered fortunate in finding his case, when prejudged by the Commons, warmly taken up by the Lords. The charge against him was the common and popular one of having injured the Protestant interest by undue liberality towards Papists, and he had given great offence by refusing to join in a procession for celebrating an anniversary held in high honour by the Orangemen. An address to the Queen for his removal was carried in the Lower House on December 13, 1713, which was met and counteracted by addresses of a diametrically opposite tendency from the Upper House and the Convocation. The Lords also directed the prosecution of one of his assailants for saying that 'the Lord Chancellor was a canary bird, a villain, and had set this country by the ears, and ought to be hanged.'

He was the friend of Prior and the correspondent of Swift, who, in a letter to Dr. King, relating to the rival addresses, dwells on the inexpediency of giving a triumph to either party. That the assailants obtained none, is patent from the fact that Phipps held his ground till the accession of George I., when a general change of Government took place, and, ceasing to be Lord Chancellor, he resumed his practice at the English Bar, where (we are told) he was much employed by Jacobites and Tories—a fact which goes

far to justify the instinctive antipathy of the Irish Williamites.

Phipps was succeeded in 1714 by Sir Alan Brodrick, whose accession to the Irish Woolsack is hailed by the biographer as the commencement of a new era for the Irish Bar, because, although it had rarely been wanting in eminent members, Brodrick was the first on whom the highest prize of the profession had been bestowed—the honour being enhanced by his being at the same time raised to the peerage by the title of Lord Midleton. It must be admitted, however, that the appointment was not altogether the recognition or reward of forensic distinction, although he had risen to the rank of Solicitor-General; for he was Speaker of the Irish House of Commons from the second year of Queen Anne till his elevation to the Chancellorship—an uninterrupted period of more than eleven years.

The main grounds of complaint against the alien Chancellors being their affection for their native land and their frequent absence from the proper sphere of their duty, it was provoking in the extreme to Irish patriots to find the Green Isle no better treated by the most highly favoured of her sons. Onewhile, on the plea of ill-health, and then again on the pretence of private or public business, Lord Midleton was in the habit of paying frequent visits to England, one of which he prolonged to the extraordinary duration of sixteen months. The subject was taken up by the Irish House of Lords, who appointed a committee of inquiry, and the result was a resolution to the effect that there had been a failure of justice, owing to the delay of business in the equity courts. His lordship had gone the length of reducing to writing his fixed determination to resist, come what come might:

'1. My resolution is never to make it my own act to lay down, but rather to be laid aside without any cause given by me, as I have been ill-used without any.'

But his courage oozed away as the impending cloud blackened, and, having offended instead of conciliated the Viceroy, he anticipated the threatened address for his removal by resigning.

The auspicious era when the Irish Great Seal began to be deemed the appanage of the Irish bar has clearly been antedated by Mr. O'Flanagan; for the next five Chancellors—West, Wyndham, Jocelyn, Bowes, and Hewitt (Lord Lifford)—were Englishmen, and only one of them, Bowes, earned his promotion in the Irish Courts. The manner in which Hewitt obtained the Irish Great Seal sufficiently shows that Irish claims and feelings were still altogether overlooked or set aside in the disposal of it. He was an English barrister, who had obtained the rank of Serjeant and a seat in Parliament. 'The style of his oratory (says Mr. O'Flanagan) may be surmised by the anecdote that Charles Townshend, on leaving the House while Serjeant Hewitt was pounding away on some dull legal question, was asked "whether the House was up?" "No," he replied very gravely, "but the Serjeant is." From this we may infer that his speeches were regarded as a bore!'

The inference is just; but the anecdote is traditionally told of Burke. Hewitt, we need hardly say, did not rise by oratory.[1] He rose by the patronage of Lord Camden, his particular friend, who, on becoming Lord Chancellor of England, immediately intimated that a seat in the King's Bench, about to become vacant, was meant for him. Hewitt hesitated: he thought he could do better for his family by sticking to politics: in other words, by continuing to bore the House of Commons and the Ministry till they paid him

[1] There was another Serjeant Hewitt, of whom Curran said: 'His speech put me exactly in mind of a familiar utensil called an *extinguisher*: it began at a point, and on it went widening and widening, until at last it fairly put out the question altogether.'

his price for being rid of him. 'He added that Bowes, the Lord Chancellor of Ireland, was upwards of seventy years of age, and if his lordship's friendship guaranteed that office, the place of puisne judge would be accepted as an intermediate step to the expected elevation.' According to our present notions, the consummate coolness of this stipulation is startling; but Lord Camden acquiesced and gave the promise, conditioned on the Irish Great Seal becoming vacant while he held the English. It thus appears that the Irish Chancellorship stood upon the same footing as the puisne judgeships in England, which have always been in the gift of the Lord Chancellor when strong enough to insist on his traditional privileges.

Hewitt, created Lord Lifford, held the Irish Great Seal twenty-two years, under nine successive Viceroys, with corresponding changes of Government; and though the emoluments of his office were then estimated at 12,000*l.* a year, he was the frequent object of Parliamentary bounty in the shape of grants, amounting altogether to 34,000*l.* His tenure of office embraced the brightest and most turbulent period of Irish history—the Volunteer movement and the Declaration of Independence. It was in his time that Grattan and Flood rivalled each other in stirring appeals to the latent energies of their country, whilst Hussey de Burgh painted the situation in the celebrated apostrophe which is the sole authenticated fragment of his oratory: 'Talk not to me of peace! Ireland is not in a state of peace: it is smothered war. England has sown her laws like dragons' teeth, and they have sprung up armed men!'

How did Hewitt demean himself in this emergency? We learn from his biographer that 'while the affairs of Ireland were thus critical, the Lord Lieutenant was deprived of the advice and assistance of the Lord Chancellor, who was prevented from attending the

deliberations of the Castle officials by his indisposition.' His model was the fox, who, when questioned by the sick lion, had lost the sense of smelling by a cold: he kept in the background whenever the political storm was raging, and a sagacious contemporary has cited him as a marked example of two maxims which are recommended to political aspirants:—

'*Be always an actor.* A man who would establish a great character with the world must be a constant actor; and the best rule to adopt for that purpose is to consider every dress you put on, every time you change cloaks, every change of company or situation, as a new scene in which you have a part to act for praise. Siddons is as great a model as ever I saw on the stage. Mr. Burgh, Ch. Baron, Mr. Pery, and L. Lifford the best off the stage.

'*Never give offence to any man; he will have power to resent.*[1] Almost the only thing by way of observation I ever heard Lord Lifford say worth remembering, though he was one of the wisest practitioners with the world I ever knew, was upon the subject of moderation, which is a branch of temper, *i. e.* dissimulation, of which he was a great master: "For such a Government as ours," said he, "there is scarcely any individual so obscure but may be one time or other sufficiently connected with power to do any man mischief; no man should, therefore, give offence; no man is fit for great affairs who has not a total mastery of his temper." N.B.—Fear was the prudence of his life, caution his shield, and temper his fort.'

These passages are taken from the Diary of Scott, Earl of Clonmel, Chief Justice of the King's Bench, who was not deficient in the pliability which he commends. He accepted the Attorney-Generalship, offered him by Lord Lifford, with the significant words, 'My Lord, you have spoilt a patriot.'

It is difficult to imagine a greater contrast to Lord

[1] 'There never yet was human power
Which could evade, if unforgiven,
The patient search and vigil long
Of him who treasures up a wrong.'—*Mazeppa.*

Lifford than his successor, Lord Clare; the proudest and haughtiest of men, the most uncompromising of politicians, careless of offence, reckless of consequences, and certainly the greatest of the long list of Lord Chancellors of Ireland; by which we mean the one who exercised the most commanding influence in that capacity, although equalled or excelled by many in eloquence and law. He was also the first who fairly broke down and discredited the practice of confining the Irish Great Seal to Englishmen; for he was an Irishman of the most obnoxious sort, belonging by descent to the subject race and faith.

His grandfather was a Roman Catholic farmer, and his uncle a priest, at whose suggestion his father was educated at the Irish College in Paris. Whether the future Lord Chancellor was brought up or subsequently turned Protestant, is left in doubt. As his father had made a large fortune at the bar, John Fitz-Gibbon started with every advantage except birth and connection. He obtained, concurrently with Grattan, the highest honours at Trinity College, Dublin, and afterwards graduated at Oxford. He was called to the bar in Trinity Term, 1772. The fees at the Irish bar have been always comparatively low—less by more than a half than what are ordinarily marked on English briefs. When, therefore, we find from Fitz-Gibbon's fee-book that he received 343*l.* the first year after his call, it is obvious that he sprang into practice at a bound; and we are compelled to dismiss the statement of a political opponent (Barrington) that he was idle and dissipated, or neglectful of business as a junior. He joined the Munster Circuit, 'which (according to Mr. O'Flanagan) has always numbered names high in the legal annals of Ireland; and at this period Barry Yelverton, John Philpott Curran, and Hugh Carleton, were acknowledged leaders.' Curran was called to the bar three years later than Fitz-

Gibbon, who presented him with his first bag for good luck.[1]

'Fitz Gibbon was soon a great favourite with the discriminating attorneys of the Munster Circuit. Of slender figure, not very robust health, and rather delicate features, he had the haughty air, the imperious glance, and despotic will of a Roman emperor. He was an able and ready advocate, exceedingly painstaking, always master of his case, and these qualifications ensured him abundance of briefs.'

His college reputation, combined with his successful conduct of the College Election Petition of 1778, led to his being chosen member for the University of Dublin in 1780; and he speedily established a parliamentary reputation by a style of speaking which made him dangerous as an opponent and eminently useful as an ally. Bold, rapid, aggressive, and incisive, he supplied the want of high eloquence and close argument by forcible invective or stinging personality, and often gave an air of success to a bad or losing cause by the arrogant affectation of superiority. The scene on which he entered is strikingly brought home to the mind's eye by a picture in the possession of the Grattan family, which, if Irishmen of opposite parties could co-operate like Englishmen, would have been engraved by subscription long ago, and be as well known as Copley's 'Death of Chatham,' which it most resembles in design and manner.

The subject is 'The Right Hon Henry Grattan, Moving the Declaration of Rights.' It contains portraits of all the Irish celebrities of the period, male and female, and (by a pardonable anachronism) of some who were not strictly contemporary; the peers, ladies, and others not

[1] 'Life of Curran, by his Son,' vol. i. p. 168, second edition. Mr. O'Flanagan gives the date, 1775, of Curran's call, in a note to the same page in which he mentions Curran amongst the acknowledged leaders when Fitz Gibbon joined the circuit! This is what we call blundering in good faith.

members of the House of Commons, being brought in as spectators. Taken as a whole, they form a splendid galaxy. What genius, eloquence, public virtue, wit, grace, and loveliness are there! What elements of greatness, and alas, what seeds of dissension and decay! The contemplation of this scene inspires a feeling near akin to that with which the Persian monarch gazed on his countless but perishable host. Before their patriotic purposes can be practically carried out, before the foundations of their liberty can be consolidated, they will be again divided into hostile camps, again assailing each other's characters or flying at each other's throats, again contending whether their boasted independence shall be sold to the British Minister or be handsomely and gratuitously handed over to France. The patriotic and loyal Charlemont, the Irish Lafayette, whose army of volunteers is morally as well as materially strengthened by Papists, will record a willing and conscientious vote against their admission to legislative rights; and the haughty Fitz Gibbon, who vehemently applauds and stands prepared to back Grattan, will strain every nerve to destroy the fabric they are now constructing together, and do his best to hang the chief architect as a traitor before they die.

All the speakers of note who took part in the Irish debates on the question of British supremacy advocated a resort to force :—

'The attainment of Magna Charta had no precedent; it was a great original transaction, not obtained by votes in Parliament, but by barons in the field. To that great original transaction England owes her liberty, and to the great original transaction at Dungannon Ireland will be indebted for hers. The Irish volunteers had associated to support the laws and the constitution—the usurpations of England have violated both, and Ireland has therefore armed to defend the principles of the British Constitution against the violations of the British Government.'

So declaimed Grattan, and he was followed in the same strain by Fitz Gibbon, whose whole after life was employed in crushing those who carried the dangerous principle of resistance to what they deemed its legitimate conclusions.

'As Ireland is committed, no man, I trust, will shrink from her support, but go through, hand and heart, in the establishment of our liberties. As I was cautious in committing, so I am now firm in asserting, the rights of my country: my declaration, therefore, is, that as the nation has determined to obtain the restoration of her liberty, it behoves every man in Ireland to stand firm.'

Naturally enough it was a Liberal Government that first engaged his services, and it was in a great measure owing to the recommendation of Grattan that he became Attorney-General for Ireland (overleaping the intermediate step of Solicitor-General) in 1783. Mr. George Ponsonby disapproved the appointment, and Mr. Daly replied to a friend who spoke of Fitz-Gibbon's patriotic tendencies, 'You are quite mistaken: that little fellow will deceive you all.' And so he did, but not with malice prepense—not in a way to justify a charge of treachery or dissimulation. Officially bound to uphold law and order, it stands to reason that a man of his temper must, sooner or later, break with a party which pleaded for liberty in a tone bordering on licentiousness and not unfrequently insulted or defied authority. One of the earliest occasions when they learnt what they had to expect at his hands, was when Mr. Flood brought forward the Reform Bill adopted by the Volunteer Delegates, attired in his Volunteer uniform, as if to intimate the nature of the propelling influence at his back.

'I did hope,' said Fitz Gibbon, 'that some new proof of the necessity of reform would be urged, and that we should not be entertained with the flights of visionary speculatists, with the vagaries of theory and absurd hypothesis; but we

endure all this because the wise men of 1783 cannot reconcile certain abstract ideas of irrational system-mongers in England with the free and happy Constitution of this country. I do not oppose the introduction of the Bill, because it is *a farrago of nonsense, a compound of constitutional absurdities*, and directly contrary to the first response of the great Dungannon oracle. No, I will oppose it because it comes under the mandate of a turbulent military congress.'

His daring spirit was conspicuously displayed when (September, 1784) a meeting was held in Dublin, under the presidency of the High Sheriffs, at which it was moved and carried that delegates should attend a National Congress. The first step taken by the Attorney-General was to address a letter to the Sheriffs, warning them that they had been guilty of a most outrageous breach of duty, and that, if they proceeded to call any such election, he should hold it his duty to prosecute them. The next, to attend when his letter was read, and, in the midst of the menacing uproar produced by it, to persevere in addressing the meeting and dare the Sheriffs to take the chair. The Sheriffs shrank from the responsibility, and the project of a National Congress was abandoned; but the Attorney-General, not satisfied with his triumph, proceeded against the most active Sheriff by attachment in the King's Bench, thereby treating the mere act of convening the meeting as a contempt of court. The King's Bench found the Sheriff guilty, and sentenced him to a small fine, by way of establishing the illegality of his conduct. The affair was brought before the Irish House of Commons (February 24, 1785), and led to an angry altercation between Fitz Gibbon and Curran, from which may be dated their deadly and lifelong feud. When Curran rose, Fitz Gibbon was sleeping or pretending to sleep on the ministerial bench :—

'I hope,' Curran began, 'I may be allowed to speak

to this great question without disturbing the sleep of any right honourable member; and yet perhaps I ought rather to envy than to blame his tranquillity. I do not feel myself so happily tempered as to be lulled to rest by the storms that shake the land, but if they invite rest to any, that rest ought not to be lavished on the guilty spirit.'

Fitz Gibbon was not given to pleasantry of any sort, much less good-humoured pleasantry (like Lord North's on a similar provocation), and his reply was in his bitterest and most contemptuous style. In the course of it he said, in reference to Curran's comments on the judgment of the King's Bench, that 'it was vain for any *puny babbler* with vile calumny to blast the judges of the land.' This called up Curran again :—

'The gentleman has called me *babbler*. I cannot think that this is meant as a disgrace, because in another Parliament, before I had the honour of a seat in this House, and when I was in the gallery, I have heard a young lawyer called *babbler* — the Attorney-General. I do not indeed recollect that there were sponsors at the baptismal font, nor was there any occasion, as the infant had promised and vowed so many things in his own name. Indeed, Sir, I find it difficult to reply, for I am not accustomed to pronounce a panegyric on myself. I do not well know how to do it; but since I cannot tell the House what I am, I will tell what I am not. I am not a young man whose respect in person and character depends on the importance of my office. I am not a man who thrusts himself into the foreground of a picture which ought to be occupied by a better figure. I am not a man who replies by invective when sinking beneath the weight of argument. I am not a man who denied the necessity of parliamentary reform at a time when I proved the expediency of it by reviling my own constituents, the parish clerk, the sexton, and the gravedigger: and if there is any man who can apply what *I am not to himself*, I leave him to think of it in the Committee, and contemplate it when he goes home.'

In the 'Life of Curran by his Son,' it is stated that 'although he appears here to have commenced hosti-

lities, he was apprised of Fitz Gibbon's having given out in the ministerial circle that he should take an opportunity in this debate of *putting down the young patriot.* The Duchess of Rutland and all the ladies of the Castle were present in the gallery to witness what Mr. Curran called, in the course of the debate, "this exhibition by command." According to the same authority, this debate led to the duel. Mr. Charles Phillips, who had made a similar statement in the first edition of 'Curran and his Contemporaries,' states in the edition of 1850 that he had been mistaken: that the duel resulted from an attack made by Fitz Gibbon during the discussion on Orde's propositions in August 1785: that the exhibition by command took place then, and that the challenge was provoked by Curran's animadversion upon a sentence of Fitz Gibbon's — 'Ireland is a nation easily roused, and easily appeased.' Now this sentence was notoriously uttered by Fitz-Gibbon four years afterwards, during which he had been in constant conflict with Curran; and the occasion (to which we shall come presently) was too memorable to leave the smallest doubt upon the point.

One of the strongest arguments for the Union was based upon the split between the English and Irish Parliaments on the Regency question. The Irish Parliament adopted the view taken by the English Whigs, and the utmost efforts of the Irish officials proved unavailing to carry out the wishes and policy of Mr. Pitt. Fitz Gibbon took the lead with characteristic energy and intemperance, and on the motion for an address to the Prince of Wales requesting his Royal Highness to assume the government of this realm, declared the proposed address to be not only improper but treasonable, adding that 'such was the opinion of the Lord Chancellor, the Chief Justice, and every lawyer whose approbation could give weight to his (Fitz Gibbon's) opinion.' Ponsonby quietly replied, 'Whatever respect I have

for the right honourable gentleman's talents, I never relied much on his assertions, and as I never myself use assertions for arguments, I hope he will excuse me from believing his.' Curran went further, as if resolved never to be distanced in personality:—

'I have heard strange language from the Attorney-General. It was more like the language of an attorney than that of an Attorney-General: it was that kind of silly fatuity that, on any other subject, I would leave to be answered by silence and contempt; but when blasphemy is uttered against the Constitution, it would not pass under its insignificance, because the essence should be reprehended, though the doctrine could not make a proselyte.'

At the dictation of the Attorney-General, who was now strong enough to dictate, fifteen men of the highest rank, beginning with the Duke of Leinster, were summarily dismissed from places and pensions to the amount of 20,000*l.* a year; and Mr. Pitt wrote him a letter of thanks, concluding, 'Allow me to add how happy I feel personally at such a moment in being embarked in the same boat with you.'

In a debate in August, 1789, on Mr. Flood's resolution declaratory of the rights of the Irish Parliament, the quarrel between Fitz Gibbon and Curran came to a crisis. It was after Curran had spoken that Fitz-Gibbon uttered his offensive apothegm: 'If Ireland seeks to quarrel with Great Britain, she is a besotted nation. Great Britain is not easily aroused, nor easily appeased; Ireland *is* easily aroused, and easily put down.' He was here called to order by Flood, who declared 'he had never heard more mischievous or more inflammatory language, nor more saucy folly.' Flood was called to order in his turn, and the Attorney-General continuing, turned fiercely round on Curran:

'The politically insane gentleman (Mr. Curran) has asserted much, but he only emitted some effusions of the witticisms of his fancy. His declamation, indeed, was better

calculated for the stage of Sadler's Wells than the floor of a House of Commons. A mountebank, with but one half the honourable gentleman's theatrical talent for rant, would undoubtedly make his fortune. However, I am somewhat surprised he should entertain such a particular asperity against me, as I never did him any favour. But, perhaps, the honourable gentleman imagines he may talk himself into consequence; if so, I should be sorry to obstruct his promotion; he is heartily welcome to attack me. One thing, however, I will assure him, that I hold him in so small a degree of estimation, either as a man or lawyer, that I shall never hereafter deign to make him any answer.'

The traditional story is that Curran rose and stung Fitz Gibbon to the quick by retorting, 'What the right honourable gentleman had said of his country is true of himself; *he* is easily roused and as easily put down.' The point is weakened by dilution in the report:—

'I have been told by the right honourable gentleman, that I have poured forth some effusion of fancy. That is a charge I shall never be able to retort upon him. He has said I am insane. For my part, were I the man who, when all debate had subsided—who, when the Bill had fallen to the ground, and was given up, had risen for the purpose of pronouncing an inflammatory speech against my country, I should be obliged to any friend who would excuse my conduct by attributing it to insanity. Were I a man possessed of so much arrogance as to set up the ideas of my own little head against the opinion of the nation, I would thank the friend who would say, "Heed him not, he is insane;" nay, if I were such a man, I would thank the friend who would send me to Bedlam. If I knew one man who was easily aroused and as easily appeased, I would not give his character as that of the whole nation. The right honourable gentleman says he never came here with written speeches. I never suspected him of it; and I believe there is not a gentleman in this House, who, having heard what has fallen from him, will ever suspect him of writing speeches. But I will not pursue him further. I will not combat with a young fencer. When a pass is made at me by a young arm, I will content myself with warding it off. I will not enter into a conflict in which

victory can gain no honour. The right honourable gentleman should have known that on former occasions I was merciful in my resentment.'

Directly after the debate Fitz Gibbon challenged Curran; and the combatants, after being duly placed, were left to fire when they chose. Curran fired first, and missed. 'I never,' he told Phillips, 'saw any one whose deliberation was more malignant than Fitz-Gibbon's. After I had fired, he took aim at me for more than half-a-minute; and on its proving ineffectual, I could not help exclaiming to him, "Mr. Attorney, you certainly were *deliberate enough*."'[1]

Scenes of violent altercation leading to duels were of constant occurrence; but the duels were generally bloodless, and the personalities were to a singular and unaccountable extent harmless or inappropriate. It was simply absurd for Fitz Gibbon to speak of Curran as a puny babbler, or for Curran to treat Fitz Gibbon, in the maturity of age, reputation, and authority, as a 'young fencer' with whom it was beneath him to cross swords. The fashionable attendance in the Irish House of Commons encouraged unseemly exhibitions in two ways: by stimulating the desire for display and by preventing the interference of the Speaker, who would have fallen into marked disfavour with the fair portion of the audience if he had baulked them of their promised entertainment. The privilege of speaking a second time (except in Committee) is strictly confined to explanation. Yet in the well-known scene

[1] The precise circumstances of this duel are as difficult to fix as the date. Mr. H. Grattan, who places it in August, 1785, says:—'Mr. Ogle was second to the Attorney-General. He was a man of courage, certainly. But the matter terminated in a manner by no means creditable to his friend. The parties were to fire by signal: Fitz Gibbon did not do so; but, reserving his fire, he took deliberate aim at Mr. Curran, and, having missed him, walked off the ground without receiving or even asking for an apology, or firing a second time, although he had been the challenger, in a case where the object had been to obtain satisfaction'—('Memoirs of the Life and Times of the Right Hon. Henry Grattan').

of crimination and recrimination between Flood and Grattan, they were permitted to make several speeches each, exclusively composed of invective and abuse.

Fitz Gibbon's social success kept pace with his political ascendency. He rivalled General St. Leger in devotion to the beautiful Duchess of Rutland;[1] and a supper given by him in her honour, after an amateur performance at the Shaw's Court Theatre, was the grand event of the spring season of 1786. Private theatricals were then the rage, and so many of the performers at this theatre were members of the House of Commons that the first representation was postponed till Parliament was prorogued. On one occasion, when the performance of scenes from 'Macbeth' at a private house was to be followed by a supper, a real banquet with well-filled dishes and decanters was laid out for the scene in which Banquo's ghost appears, and the intended guests were seated round the table. The part of Macbeth was acted by Flood, that of the ghost by Sir Hercules Langrishe (the patriot to whom Burke's 'Letters' are addressed), who, seeing a bottle of claret temptingly within reach, coolly helped himself to a bumper and drank it off. This was too much for the risible faculties of the gravest: all tragic emotion was at an end; and Flood, vowing that the incident had been meditated to destroy the effect of what he deemed his masterpiece, called out Sir Hercules, and the affair was forthwith referred to Bushe and another senator; who, after more than one conference, arranged

[1] It is recorded in the Viceregal annals of Ireland that one day, at a Castle dinner, after the Duchess had dipped her fingers in a water glass, the General caught it up and drank off the contents. 'If you want another draught, St. Leger,' remarked the Duke, 'the Duchess puts her feet in hot water before going to bed.' Lady Herbert, in her 'Impressions of Spain,' tells a parallel story of Maria de Padilla, the beautiful wife of Pedro the Cruel. It was the custom for the gallants of the court to drink the water in which the Queen had bathed, and Pedro took one of his knights to task for not doing like the rest. 'Sire,' he replied, 'I should fear lest, having tasted the sauce, I should covet the bird.'

that Sir Hercules should apologise. This he did by saying that he 'was sorry for what had happened; but, being tired and thirsty, if he had given up the claret he should have given up the ghost.' [1]

When the Irish Lord Chancellorship was vacated by the death of Lord Lifford, Fitz Gibbon's claims were so high that it seemed a matter of course for the succession to devolve upon him. He was the master-spirit of the Irish administration: he had earned and received the warm approval of the Prime Minister; the Lord Lieutenant (the Marquis of Buckingham) and the Chief Secretary threatened to resign if he was passed over. Yet an obstacle was raised which for a time seemed insurmountable. Thurlow stood upon his prescriptive right as Lord Chancellor of England to nominate the Lord Chancellor of Ireland, and he rested his *veto* upon the almost unbroken practice of never bestowing the office on an Irishman. Mr. O'Flanagan states (what we should be slow to believe without unimpeachable authority) that, after resisting the Prime Minister and the Lord Lieutenant, the iron-hearted Thurlow yielded to the persuasions or cajoleries of the widowed Duchess of Rutland. Contrary to his usual practice, he condescended to explain his opposition, and did it with a good grace. He wrote a congratulatory letter to Fitz Gibbon, in which he says:—

'If it were clear that the precedent of relaxing the rule, out of attention to so much merit, would never be repeated till a similar occasion should offer, the exception would, probably, not hurt the rule. But if it must be repeated, as often as similar merit is claimed, probably the exception eats up the rule.'

Thurlow and Fitz Gibbon were congenial spirits:

[1] Sir Henry Cavendish was an amateur reporter of debates. When Sir Hercules was asked whether Sir Henry had been taking notes on the night of a critical division, he replied, 'He has been taking either *notes* or money—I don't know which.'

they were both bold, unbending, arrogant, and insolent: Thurlow being the bluntest and most unprincipled of the two. There is no part of Fitz Gibbon's career, not even that relating to the Union, so open to reproach as Thurlow's double-dealing during the King's illness, coupled with the speech ('When I forget my king,' &c.) which provoked the crushing and profane repartee of Wilkes. Neither the English nor the Irish Chancellor possessed the required amount of learning or practical knowledge. Most of Thurlow's decrees were drawn up by Hargrave, who went by the name of the lion's provider. Fitz Gibbon's method of doing business is thus illustrated by the biographer:

'While Lord Clare was Chancellor, a native of Limerick, who wandered from the banks of the Shannon to those of the Liffey, after watching the progress of an equity cause in the Court of Chancery, and returned to the place whence he came, was asked on his return, "How the Chancellor got on as a Judge?"

'"Chancellor, indeed!" repeated the Garryowen boy; "'tis he has the asy sate of it. He doesn't spake a word; but when the Counsellors are done argufying, he leans over the desk, and gives a nod to Jack Dwyer, who tells him what to do. 'Tis Jack Dwyer ought to be Chancellor, *for he makes all the decrees.*"'

This is partially confirmed by Tone in his Diary:

'Wolfe is the Chancellor's private tutor in legal matters. Fitz Gibbon has read "Coke upon Littleton" under his papa. He has a very intelligent clerk to write his papers; he has Boyd to hunt his cases, and he has some talents, great readiness and assurance, and—there is Fitz Gibbon.'

The rancorous enmity with which he pursued his old adversary, Curran, from the judicial bench, was utterly indefensible. So soon as it became clear that the advocate had not the ear of the court, no solicitor could employ him without compromising the client's interest: his annual loss of professional income from the

ban set upon him is computed by his son at 1,000*l.* a year, and he himself, in a letter to Grattan, wrote:—

'I make no compromise with honour. I had the merit of provoking and despising the personal malice of every man in Ireland who was the known enemy of our country. Without the walls of the Courts of Justice my character was pursued with the most persevering slander, and within those walls, though I was too strong to be beaten down by any judicial malignity, it was not so with my clients; and my consequent losses in professional income have never been estimated at less, as you have heard, than 30,000*l.*'

On the rare occasions when he was employed in Lord Clare's Court, he caught eagerly at every opportunity of resenting the ungenerous treatment to which he was systematically exposed. Lord Clare had a favourite dog which was permitted to follow him to the bench. One day during an argument of Curran's, the Chancellor turned aside and began to fondle the dog, with the obvious view of intimating inattention or disregard. The counsel stopped; the judge looked up: 'I beg pardon,' continued Curran, 'I thought your lordships had been in consultation; but, as you have been pleased to resume your attention, allow me to impress upon your excellent understandings,' &c.

This half-humorous sally was a fleabite to the bitter revenge he took before a tribunal in which he could command a fair hearing and a sympathising audience. In 1790 one of the most stirring Irish questions was whether the election of the Lord Mayor of Dublin lay with the Aldermen or the Common Council. It came before the Lord Lieutenant and Privy Council, forming an open and crowded Court, at which the Lord Chancellor presided. Curran appeared as counsel for the popular candidate, and insisted on arguing the case as one involving constitutional rights of the broadest and most important kind. Under the thin disguise of commenting on the line taken by a former Chancellor,

Sir Constantine Phipps, on an analogous occasion, he taxed the resources of his fertile fancy for images to insult and stigmatise Lord Clare. Then occurred one of the most remarkable scenes ever exhibited in a court of justice:—

'In this very Chamber did a Chancellor and Judges sit, with all the gravity and affected attention to arguments in favour of that liberty and those rights which they conspired to destroy. But to what ends, my lords, offer arguments to such men? A little peevish mind may be exasperated, but how shall it be corrected by refutation? How fruitless would it have been to represent to that wretched Chancellor that he was betraying those rights he was sworn to maintain; that he was involving a government in disgrace and a kingdom in panic and consternation; that he was violating every sacred duty and every solemn engagement that binds him to himself, his country, and his God! Alas! my lords, by what argument could any man hope to reclaim or dissuade a mean, illiberal, and unprincipled minion of authority, induced by his profligacy to undertake, and bound by his avarice and vanity to persevere? He probably would have replied to the most unanswerable arguments by some cant, contumelious and unmeaning apophthegm, delivered with the fretful smile of irritated self-sufficiency and disconcerted arrogance; or even if he could be dragged by his fears to a consideration of the question, by what miracle could the pigmy capacity of a stunted pedant be enlarged for the reception of the subject? To endeavour to approach it would have only removed him to a greater distance than he was before, as a little hand that strives to grasp a mighty globe is thrown back by the reaction of its own efforts to comprehend.

'It may be given to a Hale or a Hardwicke to discover and retract a mistake. The errors of such men are only specks that arise for a moment on the surface of a splendid luminary—consumed by its heat, or irradiated by its light, they soon disappear; but the perverseness of a mean and narrow intellect are like the excrescences that grow upon a body naturally cold and dark; no fire to waste them, and no ray to enlighten, they assimilate and coalesce with those qualities so congenial to their nature, and acquire an incorrigible permanence in the union with kindred frost and

kindred opacity. Nor, indeed, my lords, except when the interests of millions can be affected by the vice or folly of an individual, need it be much regretted that, to things not worthy of being made better, it hath not pleased Providence to afford the privilege of improvement.

'*Lord Chancellor.*—Surely, Mr. Curran, a gentleman of your eminence in your profession must see that the conduct of former Privy Councils has nothing to do with the question before us. The question lies in the narrowest compass—it is, whether the Commons have a right of arbitrary and capricious rejection, or are obliged to assign a reasonable cause for their disapprobation? to that point you have a right to be heard, but I hope you do not mean to *lecture the Council.*

'*Mr. Curran.*—I mean, my lords, to speak to the case of my clients, and to avail myself of any defence which I conceive applicable to that case. I am not speaking to a single judge, to a dry point of law, and on a mere forensic subject. I am addressing a very large auditory, consisting of co-ordinate members, of whom the far greater number is not versed in law. I am aware, my lords, that truth is to be sought only by slow and painful progress; I know also that error is in its nature flippant and compendious; it hops with airy and fastidious levity over proofs and arguments, and perches on assertion which it calls conclusion.'

Here the Chancellor interposed again by moving that the council-chamber be cleared, and when the argument was resumed, Curran made no further attempt to use it as the vehicle of invective or irony. There is no denying that this attack is distinguished by felicitous imagery and extraordinary powers of language, but, like most other ebullitions of the same kind, it is overdone. Lord Clare could afford to smile at being twitted with 'the pigmy capacity of a stunted pedant,' or 'the perverseness of a mean and narrow intellect.'

In pronouncing sentence, as spokesman of the House of Lords, on the Honourable Samuel Butler, a barrister, for signing a political document which their lordships held to be a seditious libel, Lord Clare said

that the offender 'could not plead ignorance, as his noble birth and his professional rank at the Bar—*to both of which he was a disgrace*—had aggravated his crime.' Butler was sentenced to pay a fine of 500*l.*, and to be imprisoned for six months. As soon as he was released he commissioned Archibald Hamilton Rowan to demand an apology or satisfaction from the Lord Chancellor. Lord Clare calmly referred to his official position and bowed Rowan out, but was not satisfied till he had taken counsel with a military friend, Colonel Murray, who undertook to see Rowan :—

'"A pretty piece of work you have made of it, Hamilton," said the Colonel, "taking a challenge to the Chancellor."

'"How came you to know what passed between us?" asked Rowan.

'"I breakfasted with Fitz Gibbon this morning, and he told me the whole affair," answered the Colonel.'

The Irish biographer states that this is the only instance he could find of a challenge to a Lord Chancellor. We are not aware of one of an actual challenge to a judge; but Lord Norbury, when Chief Justice of the Common Pleas, is recorded to have checked a learned brother by the significant hint, that he (Lord N.), in becoming a judge, had not ceased to be a gentleman. It was a favourite boast of his that he began the world with fifty pounds and a pair of hair-trigger pistols. So late as 1812 a judge of the old school, Mr. Justice Fletcher, summed up as follows, on the trial of a duellist for murder :—

'Gentlemen, it's my business to lay down the law to you, and I will. The law says the killing a man in a duel is murder, and I am bound to tell you it is murder : therefore, in the discharge of my duty, I tell you so ; but I tell you, at the same time, *a fairer duel* than this I never heard of in the whole *coorse* of my life.'

Challenges were given or provoked by way of bra-

vado, and what would now be considered the most indefensible irregularities were permitted on the ground. In the duel between Corry and Grattan, Corry was wounded at the first fire, yet they went on covering each other with their second pistols, each wishing to reserve his fire, until it was arranged that both should fire at a signal, which they did, and missed.

The duel between Alcock and Colclough (1807), which took place in the presence of several hundred freeholders and ten or twelve county magistrates, was preceded by a discussion whether, one of the combatants being near-sighted, neither should wear spectacles or both. This was decided by a toss, and the upshot was, that a pair was borrowed from an elderly spectator and fitted on the sound-sighted man, who cried out, 'Why, with these things on my nose, I could not see to shoot my own father.' He was mortally wounded, and his antagonist went mad. They fired through a living lane formed by the crowd, one of whom, in pressing forward, got a ball through the neck.

Martin tried the temper of George Robert Fitzgerald's concealed armour by discharging two holster pistols point-blank against his ribs.

The climax of unreason was reached in Curran's affair with Major Hobart, then (1790) Secretary for Ireland. Curran, having been affronted by a man named Gifford, declared he would rather do without fighting all his life than fight such a fellow, but, as the man was a revenue officer, maintained that Major Hobart should dismiss him for his impertinence, or fight in his place. The Secretary demurred, and on Curran's insisting, referred the question to Lord Carhampton, the Commander-in-Chief, who decided it thus: 'A Secretary of State fighting for an exciseman would be rather a bad precedent, but a Major in the King's service is pugnacious by profession, and must fight anybody that asks

him.' They exchanged shots accordingly without harm to either. In one remarkable instance, Lord Carhampton, the Colonel Luttrell of Middlesex celebrity, did not abide by his own maxim; for he refused to fight his father, not because he was his father, but because he was not a gentleman.

Station, however grave, was not claimed or accepted as a bar. The Provost of the College (Hutchinson) fought Doyle, a Master in Chancery; and when a pupil asked his advice about a course of legal study, replied, 'Buy a case of good pistols, learn the use of them, and they will get you on faster than Fearne or Blackstone.' The only gleam of good sense in their code of honour was the common understanding that no affront was implied in a joke, as when, in a debate on the Sinecure Bill, Curran declared he was the guardian of his own honour and Sir Boyle Roche retorted, 'Then the honourable gentleman holds a very pretty sinecure, and has taken the wrong side.'

Rowan, who carried Butler's message to Lord Clare, retained his chivalry to the last. In 1827, at the age of seventy-five, he travelled to London to demand an apology or a meeting from the late Sir Robert Peel, for some expressions used in debate. The affair was amicably adjusted and (we may take it for granted) according to the strictest notions of honour; for the Right Honourable Baronet uniformly acted on the maxim which Grattan, on his death-bed, is said to have impressed on his sons: 'Always be ready with your pistol.' Early in the century Sir Alexander Grant, of gastronomic fame, was engaged in an affair of honour, in which the third Marquis of Hertford (then Lord Yarmouth) acted as his friend. It was settled amicably, but Mr. (afterwards Sir Robert) Peel remarked, on being told of it by Grant: 'You are well out of the scrape. Yarmouth is the last man I should have chosen for a second; he is a selfish fellow who for

his own sake would never permit a meeting. I should take Daly (the fighting opponent of Martin of Galway), who would be sure to bring you off with flying colours, or make you fight.'[1]

Sir Robert was the challenger in three affairs which ended peaceably, through no fault of his or his second's, Sir Henry (afterwards Lord) Hardinge. One of the three was with O'Connell, who, despite of the vow registered in heaven, accepted the challenge. An Irish newspaper (inspired, it was said, by the Agitator) announced, first, his departure from Dublin, and next 'his arrival at Slaughter's Coffee-house, on his way to a hostile meeting with the Secretary for Ireland' (Peel). The announcement attracted the attention of the authorities; O'Connell was apprehended, and the further prosecution of the affair was stopped. Shortly afterwards, O'Connell was arguing a case in the Irish Common Pleas, and, on the Chief Justice (Norbury) assuming a puzzled look, paused and said: 'Possibly, your lordship does not *apprehend* me?' 'Oh, yes, Mr. O'Connell,' was the reply, 'no one is more easily *apprehended* when he wishes it.'

The taunt was unmerited. O'Connell was personally as well as morally and politically brave. Calling Mr. Charles Phillips aside just before taking his ground at the meeting with D'Esterre (a dead shot), he said: 'I am obnoxious to a party, and they adopt a false pretence to cut me off. I shall not submit to it. They have reckoned without their host: I promise you I am one of the best shots in Ireland at a mark, having, as a public man, considered it a duty to prepare against such unprovoked aggressions as the present. Now, remember what I say to you. I may be struck myself, and then skill is out of the question; but, if I am not,

[1] Daly was Martin's opponent at the election for the county of Galway, when, being asked which would be returned, Martin replied, 'The survivor.'

my antagonist may have cause to regret his having forced me into this conflict.' The parties were placed at twelve paces' distance, with a case of pistols *each*, and directions to fire when they chose after a given signal. They fired almost together, and D'Esterre fell mortally wounded.

The practice of duelling is so interwoven with the forensic annals of Ireland, that any sketch of them, omitting it, would be incomplete, and these illustrative incidents can hardly be considered a digression.

Unluckily for his reputation, Fitz Gibbon had committed himself decidedly against the Union. It is related that one day, after dinner, a fit of enthusiasm possessed him. 'Talk not to me,' he exclaimed, 'of a Union: if a Minister dared to do so, I would fling my office in his face;' and he flounced grandly out of the room. 'Now, mark,' said Daly, '*that* is the very man who would support it. That *little* man who talks so *big* would vote for an Union—ay, to-morrow.' Immediately on the measure being suggested by the English Ministry, he vehemently urged it on, with objects essentially distinct from theirs, unless, indeed, he very much misunderstood Lord Castlereagh and Mr. Pitt. He wrote thus from London to Lord Castlereagh in Dublin:—

'Grosvenor Square, Oct. 16, 1798.

'I have seen Mr. Pitt, the Chancellor, and the Duke of Portland, who seem to feel so sensibly the very critical situation of our *damnable* country, and that the Union alone can save it. I should have hoped that what had passed would have opened the eyes of every man in England to the insanity of their present conduct with respect to the Papists; but I can very plainly perceive that they were as full of their Popish projects as ever. I trust and hope I am not deceived: that they are fairly inclined to give them up, and to bring the measure forward unencumbered with the doctrine of Emancipation. Lord Cornwallis has intimated his acquiescence on that point, and Mr. Pitt is decided on it, and I think he will keep his colleagues steady.'

All Mr. Pitt could have been decided on was to postpone Emancipation till the Union was completed; for he resigned in 1801, because he was not permitted to satisfy the expectations he had held out to the Catholics.

The 'Cornwallis Correspondence'[1] contains ample proof of the extraordinary expedients to which the Government resorted to carry the Union; and it is no secret that the most unscrupulous and high-handed proceedings were especially favoured by Lord Clare. As soon as the measure was carried, he was made a peer of the United Kingdom and eagerly took part in the debates of the House of Lords, where he rashly attempted to indulge his characteristic arrogance and irritability. On his very first appearance he was twice called to order, and persevering in the alleged irregularity, provoked what reads very like a rebuke from the woolsack. On another occasion, he was unceremoniously put down by the Duke of Bedford; and he had the ill-luck or indiscretion to quarrel with the Lord Chancellor of England, Lord Eldon, with whose anti-Catholic convictions he perfectly agreed. His demeanour on these occasions, indiscreet as it was, belied the character given of him by Grattan, who on its being observed that he was a dangerous man, added—'A very dangerous man—to run away from.' His hostility was not limited to those who were likely to run away from him.

Fortunately for his fame, his career on this new and uncongenial stage was brief. He died in January, 1802, at his house, Ely Place, Dublin; and the feelings with which he was regarded by the bulk of the Irish nation broke out with revolting violence at his funeral. The mob which followed the hearse, yelling and shrieking, with curses loud and deep, were with

[1] Reviewed by me in the 'Quarterly Review,' No. 209, January 1859, Art. I.

difficulty restrained from heaping filth and mud upon the richly ornamented coffin; and dead cats were hurled at it in memory of a threat attributed to the deceased, 'that he would make the Irish people as tame as domestic cats.'

His unpopularity was the merited result of his besetting sins and bad qualities: his pride, his insolence, his ungovernable temper, his tyrannical disposition, his avowed contempt for his country and his countrymen. But a calm review of his conduct will bring to light actions, views, and sentiments which should go far towards mitigating the harshness of the national judgment. During the Irish Rebellion of 1798, far from seeking to entrap the misguided leaders of birth and education, such as Archibald Hamilton Rowan, the Sheares, Emmett, and Lord Edward Fitz Gerald—he caused ample warning to be given to them. 'Will nobody,' he wrote to a connection of Lord Edward's, 'reason with that rash young man? Will nobody induce him to leave the kingdom? I pledge myself every port shall be left open to him.' While Lord Edward lay in Newgate (Dublin), delirious from his wound, his aunt, Lady Louisa Connolly, applied in vain to the Lord Lieutenant (Lord Camden) and the Chief Secretary (Lord Castlereagh) for an order to see him. In her despair, she thought of the Lord Chancellor and drove to his house. He had a large dinner-party, and dinner was hardly off the table. He went to her directly and heard her request. 'Lady Louisa,' he said, after a pause for reflection, 'to grant the order is impossible. We have decided in Council that none shall be given. But you are a woman, and a near relative. I know of no decision which prohibits my taking you with me. He went with her at once, and remained three hours in an outer apartment during her interview with her nephew.

In Moore's 'Life of Lord Edward Fitz Gerald,' the

most unfavourable impression is conveyed of the (so-called) harsh and cruel conduct of the Irish officials, including the Lord Chancellor, in refusing Lord Edward's family access to him till three hours before his death. On the appearance of the first edition, Catherine, Countess of Charleville, who had repeatedly heard the exact particulars related by Lady Louisa Connolly, her intimate friend, sent a note of them to Moore,[1] who seems to have received it in the spirit of the Abbé Vertot when he exclaimed, '*Mon siège est fait!*' In the third edition of the Life, now before us, there is not the slightest notice of the part taken in procuring the interview by Lord Clare, who still comes in for his full share of the reproaches levelled at the authorities.

When Lord Clare was told that he was dying, he sent for his wife: 'I have but one request to make of you: it is that you will burn all my papers; should they remain after me, hundreds may be compromised.'

On accepting the British peerage, which required frequent absence from his Court, he adopted some judicious measures for preventing the delay of justice; and, enslaved as he was by the spirit of party, he had scruples (too easily silenced) about elevating a mere partisan, notoriously incompetent, to the judgment seat. When Toler (Lord Norbury) was first named, he exclaimed: 'Make him a Chief Justice! Oh, no; if he must mount the bench, make him a Bishop, or an Archbishop, or—anything but a Chief Justice.'

There is only one witticism recorded of Lord Clare, and we agree with Mr. Phillips that it is good enough to make us wish for more. When Yelverton, then Chief Baron, went over to England on the occasion of George III.'s illness, his companions were Curran, Egan,[2] and a Mr. Barrett, reputed to be fond of play.

[1] Told me by Lady Charleville, one of the most remarkable women I ever knew and the best friends I ever had.

[2] Egan was a very large man and very hirsute. 'Did you ever see

'He travels,' said Fitz Gibbon, 'like a mountebank, with his monkey, his bear, and his sleight-of-hand man.'

'It feels like a relief (observes Mr. O'Flanagan) to turn from the turbulent and fretful career of Lord Clare to the calmer and more equable course presented by the life of his successor on the woolsack, Lord Redesdale, one of the most eminent, and, certainly, with the exception of Lord St. Leonards, the most distinguished Equity Judge who ever held the Great Seal of Ireland.' Unfortunately the charm of a biography is often in an inverse ratio to the quiet unobtrusive virtues of the man, and an equable course is necessarily less productive of incident than a turbulent one. Excellent lawyer as he was, Lord Redesdale is now principally remembered in Dublin by the jokes made at his expense.

An amusing description of his first dinner with the Irish judges and King's counsel is given by Barrington, from which it would seem that his lordship had himself to thank for the running fire of pleasantries opened on him. He took it into his head to be light and facetious, which was not his forte. After two or three failures, he remarked that, when he was a lad, cock-fighting was the fashion, and that both ladies and gentlemen went full dressed to the cock-pit, the ladies being in hoops. 'I see now, my lord,' said Toler, 'it was then the term *cock-a-hoop* was invented.' A little disconcerted, the Chancellor produced another reminiscence of his youth, namely, that when people learnt to skate, they carried blown bladders under their arms to buoy them up if the ice broke. 'Ah, my lord,' said the same tormentor, 'that is what we call *bladderum skate* in Ireland.'

such a *chest* as this?' he exclaimed, striking his breast. 'A *trunk*, you mean, my dear Egan,' replied Curran. It was Egan, on whom Curran, when they were about to fight a duel, proposed to chalk out his own size, upon an understanding that any shot outside the chalk lines should go for nothing.

In the hope of effecting a diversion, he next turned to a King's counsel whom he just knew by name: 'Mr. Garrett O'Farrell, I believe you are from the county of Wicklow, where your family have long held considerable property and are very numerous. I think I was introduced to several during my late tour in that county. 'Yes, my lord,' replied O'Farrell, 'we *were* very numerous; but so many of us have lately been hanged for sheep-stealing, that the name is getting rather scarce.' The scene in which Plunket played him off about the kites has been frequently in print.

Although more puzzled than pleased with the habits and peculiar humour of his new associates, Lord Redesdale got on tolerably well with them on the whole: he made valuable additions to their stock of equity, and O'Connell declared before Parliament, 'Lord Redesdale was the best Chancellor I ever saw.'[1]

Lord Redesdale was summarily displaced by the Fox and Grenville Government in 1806, and Mr. George Ponsonby was appointed his successor. This was a strong measure, for Mr. Ponsonby's claims were almost exclusively political; and Mr. O'Flanagan's brief notice of him dwells more on his parliamentary than on his forensic or judicial exploits. His tenure of the Great Seal lasted less than a year; and, retiring on the usual pension, he became for a time leader of the Opposition in the House of Commons. His appearance in that capacity is commemorated by one of the cle-

[1] At the trial of Horne Tooke, the Attorney-General (Scott, Lord Eldon) replying to some attack of the defendant, said: 'I can endure anything but an attack on my good name: it is the little patrimony I have to leave to my children, and, with God's help, I will leave it unimpaired.' Here he burst into tears, and the Solicitor-General (Mitford) wept with his leader. 'Do you know,' exclaimed Tooke in a loud aside, 'what Mitford is crying for? He is crying to think of the *little* patrimony Scott's children are likely to get.' To explain this joke, Mr. O'Flanagan thinks it necessary to state that Scott had just invested 22,000*l.* in an estate.

verest papers in 'The New Whig Guide:' 'The Trial of Henry Brougham, for calling Mr. Ponsonby an Old Woman.' In the verses on 'The Choice of Leader,' we find:

> ' "What boots our debate?"—thus the rebels began;
> "What avails the discussion of topic or plan?
> No plan can succeed and no party can thrive
> With a leader who neither can lead us nor drive.
> . . . . . .
> For six mortal years, as rhetorical graces,
> We truisms cheer'd, and extoll'd commonplaces;
> Wash'd over with praise every folly and flaw,
> And smil'd at his jokes, and look'd grave at his law
> (Could friendship do more?); while indifferent folks
> All smil'd at his law and looked grave at his jokes." '

Whatever his legal attainments, he had every title to personal consideration and esteem. He was high-born, high-bred, and highly connected. His manners were courteous, his integrity unimpeachable, his talents and acquirements above par. It is therefore remarkable that he should have been the chosen butt of the political satirist in England, and that the fiercest diatribe and coarsest personalities ever uttered in the Irish House of Commons should have been levelled at him. Toler (afterwards Lord Norbury) once answered him thus:

'What! was it come to this—that in the Irish House of Commons they should listen to one of their own members degrading the character of an Irish gentleman by language that was but fit for hallooing on a mob? Had he heard a man out of doors using such language as that by which the honourable gentleman had violated the decorum of Parliament, he would have seized the ruffian by the throat and dragged him to the dust.'

Martin, of Galway, spoke as follows, Mr. Ponsonby's sister being, with some other ladies, in the gallery:

'These Ponsonbys are the curse of my country. They are prostitutes, personally and politically—from that toothless

old hag who is now grinning in the gallery, to that white-livered scoundrel who is now shivering on the floor.'

A duel, a bloodless one, followed. When Martin was asked how he knew that Miss Ponsonby was in the gallery, he replied, 'Oh, I walked down to the House with Ponsonby, and he told me his sister was coming to hear him.'

Reluctant as we are to pass over Lord Manners and Sir Anthony Hart, who come next, we really have no alternative; for our remaining space is only just sufficient for a compressed tribute to the memory of Plunket, to whom must be awarded the first place amongst Irish orators, if reason and logic, as well as fancy, wit, humour, and imagination, are to be the tests. Curran's imagination has been compared to virgin gold crumbling from its own richness. Grattan's mind was pre-eminent for fertility and force. But neither of them equalled Plunket in the combination of chasteness and purity with splendour, intensity, and power. His loftiest flights and boldest bursts were tempered and restrained by the severest taste: he never risked an apostrophe, the most dangerous of rhetorical figures or artifices, until the audience were thoroughly warmed for its reception: he was never stiltish, like Sheridan in the most applauded passages of the Begum speech, nor melodramatic, like Burke in the dagger scene: he was never gaudy or flowery: in a word, he was wholly free from the faults popularly attributed to the Irish school of eloquence; and this is the reason why some of his greatest triumphs were won in the English House of Commons, in which Flood failed and Grattan obtained only a qualified success. It was a favourite aphorism of Fox, that, if a speech read well, it was not a good speech. Plunket's speeches do read well, and they are emphatically good speeches. It was the opinion of a man steeped to the lips in classic lore, the lamented Sir George Cornewall Lewis,

that Plunket came nearer to the Demosthenic model than any other modern orator: awarding the palm for Ciceronian excellence to Pitt.

Plunket has not been fortunate in his biographers. The Life, in two volumes, by his grandson, is an imperfect and unsatisfactory work: being especially deficient in accurate reports of the best speeches:[1] and Mr. O'Flanagan has vainly endeavoured to make up by admiring enthusiasm for his incapacity to grasp so varied and expansive a subject, or to keep to it. As if he had not enough upon his hands without meddling with irrelevant topics, he introduces (*àpropos* of Thurlow's being Lord Chancellor when Plunket was a student) Thurlow's well-known reply to the Duke of Grafton; and *àpropos* of Plunket's father having 'found a congenial spirit in a fair daughter of the town washed by the beauteous Lough Erne,' he tells us how the said town (Enniskillen) was once inhabited by 'the Maguires and their tributaries,' amongst whom were 'my ancestors the O'Flanagans, Chiefs of Tara, now the barony of Magheraboy.'

The upshot is that the Reverend Thomas Plunket, a Presbyterian minister of Enniskillen, married Mary, daughter of Mr. Redmund Conyngham of that ilk, and had by her six sons and two daughters, the youngest son being William Conyngham Plunket, born July 1, 1764. The family removed to Dublin in 1768, where the father died in 1776; leaving little or no fortune beyond a good name, to which the future Chancellor was mainly indebted for his education. The requisite funds were provided by the members of the paternal congrega-

[1] 'The Life, Letters, and Speeches of Lord Plunket. By his Grandson, the Hon. David Plunket. With an Introductory Preface. By Lord Brougham.' In two Volumes. London, 1867. There is little in the Introductory Preface which had not already appeared in Lord Brougham's 'Historical Sketches.' It is much to be regretted that the composition of this biography did not devolve on another grandson, the present member for Trinity College, Dublin; who, himself an excellent speaker, would at least have done justice to the oratorical portion.

tion, and were honourably repaid by him in after life with interest.

He entered Trinity College, Dublin, in 1779, obtained a scholarship in 1782, and in the course of the same year joined the Historical Society, that nursery of Irish eloquence, in which so many of his most distinguished countrymen have, like him, first essayed their powers and laid the foundation of their fame. As the audiences were not limited to the resident students, the celebrity acquired in it soon spread beyond its walls; and the distinguished position won in this Society was no inconsiderable recommendation to Plunket when (in 1787) he commenced his attendance in the Irish Courts with a view to practice. He had spent the two years preceding his call to the Bar in England reading hard, and his biographer attributes the superiority of tone and judgment of which he gave proof at starting in the conduct of cases, to the opportunities he had enjoyed of studying the best examples of English advocacy, which, it is suggested, was of a less digressive and more sober or prosaic character.

'The English barrister would deem venturing on a flight of impassioned eloquence while discussing a legal proposition as nothing short of absurdity, while an Irish barrister of this period would not have hesitated to indulge in such disporting. We have instances in which the learned counsel reminded the chief of the court he was addressing of the banquets which they shared—the friends they lost—the tears they mingled.' He next proceeds to give instances of the Irish fondness for metaphor:—'As for example, one member of the Bar implored the jury not to be influenced "by the dark oblivion of a brow." Another, whose clients had instituted proceedings against a false witness, said—"Gentlemen, my clients are not to be bamboozled. They adopted a bold course. They took the bull by the horns, and *indicted him for perjury*." A

third, anticipating the case of his opponents—"I foresee what they are at. I see the storm brewing in the distance, I smell a rat, but *I'll nip it in the bud.*"'

If Mr. O'Flanagan were equally well up in the traditions of the English bar, he would know that sentimental or poetical digressions, with mixed metaphors running riot, have been by no means peculiar to his countrymen. Erskine was quite as discursive as Curran, and even more egotistical—witness the introduction of the savage with the bundle of sticks in the speech for Stockdale, or the appeal to the probable opinion of his ancestors on a knee-buckle.[1] We have heard a learned counsel and law author (Archbold) pathetically adjuring the judge of the Bail Court to consider 'the agonising effects of a *rule nisi*;' and another (of literary and legal eminence) conclude a dry technical argument before the Common Pleas by reciting from the 'Merchant of Venice' the entire passage beginning: 'The quality of mercy is not strained.' A quondam leader of the Western Circuit and Vinerian Professor (Philip Williams), in a law lecture at Oxford, spoke thus: 'The student, launched on an ocean of law, skips like a squirrel from twig to twig, vainly endeavouring to collect the scattered members of Hippolytus.' Moreover, there was nothing extraordinary or exceptional in an Irish student's two years' residence in England for the purposes of legal study; and all things considered, we should be disposed to account for Plunket's sobriety of fancy and sense of fitness by the inborn qualities of his mind.

Such being the advantages and peculiar merits with which he started, it surprises us to find that his early eminence at the Bar was acquired in criminal cases on

[1] This was in a patent case. In the course of his address to the jury, Erskine held up the buckle and exclaimed theatrically, 'What would my ancestors have said, could they have seen this miracle of ingenuity?' 'You forget,' remarked Garrow, 'that *your* ancestors were unacquainted with the garment for which it was intended.'

the North-Western Circuit; although his keen insight into the humours and habits of the peasantry enabled him to deal with them most effectively in the witness-box. His defence of a horse-stealer made him so popular with the fraternity that one of them was heard exclaiming, 'I tell you what, boys: if I'm lagged for the next horse I steal, by Jabers I'll have Plunket.'

A prevaricating witness under cross-examination complained that the counsellor had bothered him 'entirely,' and given him the *maigrims*. '*Maigrims*,' said Lord Avonmore: 'I never heard that word before.' 'My lord,' interposed Plunket, 'the witness says I have given him the megrims, a bilious affection, merely a confusion of the head arising from the corruption of the heart.'

It was after his talents had been thoroughly tested and appreciated in the higher walks of business, that the leaders of the Opposition became anxious to secure his services as a parliamentary debater, and in the spring of 1798 Lord Charlemont sought an interview for the purpose of offering him a seat. But Lord Charlemont was opposed to Catholic Emancipation, and they separated with an expression of regret by Plunket, that 'while holding the same political opinions on almost every other topic, on one subject they were not of one mind, and he therefore declined to be a nominee of his lordship, for fear of being obliged to act against his wishes.' He was too valuable a recruit to be let slip in this fashion. Lord Charlemont requested another visit, which ended satisfactorily to both parties, and the patriot earl afterwards confessed to his son that 'Plunket prevailed over his old prejudice.'

Plunket took his seat for the borough of Charlemont on February 6th, 1798, and almost immediately came into collision with Lord Cstlereagh on the all-absorbing topic of the Union. No adversary of that noble lord assailed him with so much keen sarcasm,

so much vehement invective, so much biting personality. Yet Lord Castlereagh bore up against it with his habitual fearlessness and his usual imperturbable mien: never once suffering his temper to be ruffled, nor attempting to bring the Castle system of intimidation into play. Indeed Plunket's occasional vehemence (not to say violence) of language never brought on a duel; nor, so far as we can learn, ever provoked a challenge; the most plausible explanation being that the loftiness of his language redeemed or mitigated its offensiveness, and that a man of his earnest temperament, rapt up in his subject, neither gives nor takes affronts like one who is evidently aiming at applause and wounds the self-love of others to gratify his own. Certain it is that he took the first opportunity of delivering a meditated diatribe against Lord Castlereagh, which stands unsurpassed for polished bitterness, after giving distinct notice that he was about to stretch the privileges of debate to the uttermost verge. On Barrington's being called to order by Corry and Beresford for denouncing the means which the Government were employing to carry their measure, Plunket rose and said :—

'I have no idea that the freedom of debate shall be controlled by such frequent interruptions. I do not conceive that my honourable friend is out of order, but when my turn comes to speak, I shall repeat these charges in still stronger language, if possible, and indulge gentlemen on the other side of the House with an opportunity of taking down my words, if they have any fancy to do so.

When his turn came, after forcibly recapitulating the charges of intimidation and corruption, he fell, with the full weight of indignant patriotism and outraged public virtue, on Lord Castlereagh—

'The example of the Prime Minister of England, inimitable in its vices, may deceive the noble lord. The Minister of England has his faults; he abandoned in his latter years

the principles of reform, by professing which he obtained the early confidence of the people of England, and in the whole of his political conduct he has shown himself haughty and intractable; but it must be admitted that he has shown himself by nature endowed with a towering and transcendent intellect, and that the vastness of his moral resources keeps pace with the magnificence and unboundedness of his projects. I thank God it is much more easy for him to transfer his apostasy and his insolence than his comprehension and sagacity, and I feel the safety of my country in the wretched feebleness of her enemy. I cannot fear that the Constitution which has been formed by the wisdom of ages, and cemented by the blood of patriots and of heroes, is to be smitten to its centre by such a *green and sapless twig* as this.'

In reference to the term *sapless*, coupled with 'impotent instrument' in the same speech, Mr. O'Flanagan says: 'There was terrible force in this allusion. It is also said that, when Teeling's mother was refused pardon for her son, implicated in the rebellion of 1798, she said to Lord Castlereagh: "You cannot comprehend my feelings, my lord: I remember you have no child."' We fully acquit Plunket of intending any allusion of the sort. Under the show of apologizing for vehemence, he grows more vehement:

'But, Sir, we are told that we should discuss this question with calmness and composure. I am called on to surrender my birthright and my honour, and I am told I should be calm and should be composed. National pride! Independence of our country! These, we are told by the Minister, are only vulgar topics fitted but for the meridian of the mob, but unworthy to be mentioned to such an enlightened assembly as this; they are trinkets and gewgaws fit to catch the fancy of childish and unthinking people like you, Sir, or like your predecessor in that chair, but utterly unworthy the consideration of this House, or of the matured understanding of the noble Lord who condescends to instruct it! Gracious God! We see a Perry reascending from the tomb and raising his awful voice to warn us against the surrender of our freedom, and we see that the proud and virtuous feel-

ings, which warm the breast of that aged and venerable man, are only calculated to excite the contempt of this young philosopher, who has been transplanted from the nursery to the Cabinet to outrage the feelings and understandings of the country.'

This fine apostrophe is impaired by the same incongruity which we noted in the railing matches between Curran and Fitz Gibbon. Lord Castlereagh was in his thirtieth year in 1798, and his appearance and manner must have been singularly youthful to give even temporary effect to these sarcasms against his youth. He was, however, always distinguished by his firm, manly, aristocratic bearing, and his self-control. There was not a particle of boyish vivacity or petulance in his composition. No public character has made so perceptible an advance in public estimation as his, in exact proportion as it has become known; and it is clear, from his Correspondence, that the same statesmanlike views which he carried out in after life animated him when he was denounced as the narrow-minded foe of his native country on the floor of the Irish House of Commons.[1]

The tendency to make facts subordinate to effect is not peculiar to rhetorical historians; vehement speakers are equally subject to it. Nor are they uniformly discreet. In this same speech Plunket was hurried into a declaration or vow of which he had ample reason to repent:—

'For my part, I will resist it (the Union) to the last gasp of my existence, and with the last drop of my blood; and, when I feel the hour of my dissolution approaching, I will,

[1] Mr. Charles Phillips told me a story of Lord Castlereagh which is not included in his 'Recollections.' Lord C. was in treaty with a member for his vote, when the honourable gentleman fell ill and was, or thought himself, so near death that, on his recovery, he requested an interview with his lordship, to state that he bitterly repented of what he had done, and intended to take the first opportunity of making a clean breast of it to the House. 'And if you do,' coolly replied Lord C., 'I will give you the lie direct on the instant, and shoot you the next morning.'

like the father of Hannibal, take my children to the altar, and swear them to eternal hostility against the invaders of their country's freedom.'

This is the passage on which Cobbett harped with annoying pertinacity, nicknaming the children the young Hannibals, and periodically reminding the father that, instead of swearing his sons to eternal hostility against the British Government, he had sworn them into good places under it. In the cold, calm, and often chilling atmosphere of the English House of Commons, the orator who soars into the sublime does so at the imminent risk of a collapse. The wings of Mr. Bright's angel of death, when (in the debate on the Crimean War) 'you might almost hear their rustling,' were within an ace of being clipped. But the most excited speaker in the closing days of the Irish Parliament, combating for its existence, was addressing an audience little less excited than himself. Metaphors gathered from every branch of art, science, and literature, were profusely lavished and enthusiastically applauded. Plunket's answer to the popular argument for an Union is an example:—

'The two Parliaments may clash! So in Great Britain may King and Parliament; but we see they never do so injuriously. There are principles of repulsion! Yes; but there are principles of attraction, and from these the enlightened statesman extracts the principle by which the countries are to be harmoniously governed. As soon would I listen to the shallow observer of nature, who should say there is a centrifugal force impressed on our globe, and therefore, lest we should be hurried into the void of space, we ought to rush into the centre to be consumed there. No; I say to this rash arraigner of the dispensations of the Almighty, there are impulses from whose wholesome opposition eternal wisdom has declared the law by which we revolve in our proper sphere, and at our proper distance. So I say to the political visionary, From the opposite forces which you object to, I see the wholesome law of imperial

connection derived; I see the two countries preserving their due distance from each other, generating and imparting heat, and light, and life, and health, and vigour; and I will abide by the wisdom and experience of the ages which are passed, in preference to the speculations of any modern philosopher.'

It is no deduction from the oratorical splendour of this passage that the wisdom and experience of the age which had passed told a different story: that the two legislatures could never be made to harmonise, except by keeping the one dependent on the other. Here is another and much admired passage:—

'For the present Constitution I am ready to make any sacrifice—I have proved it. For British connection I am ready to lay down my life—my actions have proved it. Why have I done so? Because I consider that connection essential to the freedom of Ireland: do not, therefore, tear asunder to oppose to each other these principles, which are identified in the minds of loyal Irishmen. For me, I do not hesitate to declare, that if the madness of the revolutionist should tell me you must sacrifice British connection, I would adhere to that connection in preference to the independence of my country; but I have as little hesitation in saying, that if the wanton ambition of a minister should assault the freedom of Ireland and compel me to the alternative, I would fling the connection to the winds, and I would clasp the independence of my country to my heart.'

Plunket's excellence in a lighter style was displayed in his reference to the suggestion in the Speech from the Throne, that the carrying of the Union would be a great satisfaction to the Lord Lieutenant in his old age:—

'I must, for one, beg to be excused from making quite so great a sacrifice, from mere personal civility, to any Lord Lieutenant, however respectable he may be. The independence of a nation, I must own, does not appear to me exactly that kind of a bagatelle which is to be offered, by way of compliment, either to the youth of the noble lord (Lord

Castlereagh), who honours us by his presence in this House, or the old age of the noble marquis (Cornwallis), who occasionally sheds his setting lustre over the other. To the first I am disposed to say, in the words of Waller—

'I pray thee, gentle boy,
Press me no more for that slight toy;'

and to the latter I might apply the language of Lady Constance—

'"That's a good child; go to its grandam—give grandam kingdom, and its grandam will give it a plum, a cherry, and a fig– there's a good grandam."

'I hope, therefore, Sir, I shall not be thought impolite if I decline the offer of the Constitution of Ireland, either as a garland to adorn the youthful brow of the Secretary, or to be suspended over the pillow of the Viceroy.'

The Irish lawyers had the strongest personal interest in opposing the Union. Attendance in the British House of Commons was incompatible with their professional duties; and the parliamentary career of Plunket, who could not afford the required sacrifice, was temporarily closed. This did not prevent him from being made Solicitor-General in 1803, and Attorney-General in 1805; the Irish law officers not being required to engage in politics unless they thought fit. He sat for Medhurst during the short Parliament of 1807; and in 1812, having in the meantime secured an independence, was a successful candidate for the University of Dublin, which he represented till he was elevated to the peerage in 1827. He was out of Parliament from 1807 to 1812, and the first speech by which he came fairly before the British House of Commons was on Grattan's motion (February 25, 1813) for Catholic Emancipation. It was more than equal to his fame. It not only excited the warmest admiration, it actually gained votes: a rare, almost unprecedented feat in the days of the unreformed House, when members were less hampered by constituencies, and party discipline was unrelentingly enforced. Fer-

guson of Pitfour (the friend of the celebrated Duchess of Gordon,) boasted that he had heard many a speech which altered his conviction, never one that had the slightest effect upon his vote. This was the common sentiment; at least amongst members for the Northern division of this island; and it materially enhances Plunket's triumph that two of his converts (or perverts, as their friends called them) were Scotch![1]

Another occasion on which he played a prominent part was on the introduction of the Six Acts in 1819, in the course of which he dwells on the evils of a licentious press, and the danger of discussions which subjected the arcana of Government to the superficial judgment of the masses. Forcible as were his arguments and appropriate his illustrations, we find nothing among them equal to Curran's on the same subject:—'There are certain fundamental principles which nothing but necessity should expose to public examination,—they are pillars, the depth of whose foundation you cannot explore without endangering their strength.'

In reference to Plunket's speech on the press, the late Lord Dudley wrote to the Bishop of Llandaff: 'Plunket's speech, in answer to Macintosh, was amongst the most perfect replies I ever heard. He assailed the fabric of his adversary, not by an irregular fire that left parts of it standing, but by a complete radical

[1] The most remarkable instance of gaining votes by a speech was Lord Macaulay's speech on the late Lord Hotham's Bill for excluding the Master of the Rolls and other persons holding judicial offices from the House of Commons. On this occasion the anticipated decision of the House by a large majority was reversed. The late Sir Robert Peel told a member of the present Cabinet (Mr. Cardwell) that the three speeches most effective for the proposed object which he had ever heard were—Plunket's speech in (1813) on Catholic Emancipation, Canning's Lisbon Embassy speech, and the speech of Mr. T. C. Smith (afterwards Master of the Rolls in Ireland) in defence of the Irish prosecutions instituted by him as Attorney-General for Ireland. Mr. O'Flanagan places Plunket's first great speech in the session of 1807; during which, if Hansard has treated him fairly, he never addressed the house at all.

process of demolition that did not leave one stone standing on another.' The same may be said of his speech in answer to Copley (Lord Lyndhurst) in the Emancipation debate of February, 1825; although it was not until Copley had spoken for fifteen or twenty minutes that Canning gave up the intention of replying on the instant, and requested Plunket to speak next. We were present, and we could almost fancy that the author of 'The New Timon,' who has painted a life-like portrait of Plunket, was also present during the delivery of this speech :—

'Now one glance round, now upwards turns the brow,—
Hushed every breath: he rises—mark him now!
No grace in feature, no command in height,
Yet his whole presence fills and awes the sight.
Wherefore? you ask. I can but guide your guess:
Man has no majesty like earnestness.

. . . . .

Tones slow, not loud, but deep-drawn from the breast;
Action unstudied, and at times suppressed:
But as he neared some reasoning's massive close,
Strained o'er his bending head his strong arms rose,
And sudden fell, as if from falsehood torn
Some grey old keystone and knocked down with scorn.'

Yet what he displayed on this occasion was not so much what is commonly called eloquence, as the perfection of debating power. He never once warmed into declamation: it was hard, cold hitting, or pitiless tearing, throughout. He took up Copley's studied sophistries one after the other, crushed them together, broke them to bits, and then flung them aside like rubbish.

The powers which he here displayed at the bidding and on the behalf of his political leader and friend, had been called forth once before with a similar result in self-defence, when (in 1823) a vote of censure on him was moved for instituting, as Attorney-General for Ireland, a prosecution for conspiracy against the rioters in the Bottle Riot, so called because the main overt act was throwing a bottle at the Lord Lieu-

tenant (Lord Wellesley) in the theatre. As Plunket walked down Parliament Street, on his way to meet this attack, he said to Mr. Blake: 'I feel like a man going to execution under an unjust sentence.' From the grandson's account it would appear that his apprehensions were by no means groundless: 'The House received him with indifference, almost with coldness: gradually, as he commenced his defence, and his spirit was fired by a sense of this unwonted distrust, he rolled forth mass after mass of unanswerable reasoning. The audience could not deny the justice of the cause: they believed the honesty of the man, and when, at length, he closed with these simple words—"My public conduct I consign to the justice of this House, my private character I confide to its honour," it was felt that he had completely vindicated himself.'

On Canning becoming Premier, Plunket was raised to the peerage, and first the Great Seal of Ireland, and then the English Mastership of the Rolls, were intended for him; when he wrote, April 20, 1827, to a friend: 'Things have taken a turn, to me very distressing—the result, in short, is, I am a peer, and for the present without office. The Rolls I declined, not being able to reconcile myself to act against the feeling of a great number of the profession against the appointment of an Irishman, or rather an Irish barrister. Tell my friends not to question me or be surprised.' The double disappointment was somewhat mitigated by the Chief Justiceship of the Common Pleas in Ireland, Lord Norbury having been induced to retire in his favour, and in January, 1830, he at length reached the Irish woolsack, which he retained till June, 1841, when he was literally jockeyed out of it by the Whigs to make way for Lord Campbell, or (as the late Sir Robert Peel put it) 'to gratify the vanity of, certainly, an eminent and distinguished lawyer by a six weeks' tenure of office.'

The series of manœuvres by which this undeniable job was carried might not have been attempted, or might have been met and counteracted, if Lord Plunket's judicial career had been as successful as his forensic and political. The contrary is confessedly the fact. His admirers are compelled to admit that he discharged the duties of his high office in a hasty and unsatisfactory manner. 'He would not stoop to the mechanical drudgery of writing out his judgments whenever he could possibly avoid it; and he was indifferent as to their revision and correction; nor, so far as appears from his own judgments, did he take much trouble to acquaint himself with the decisions of contemporary judges.' This negligence has been injurious to his reputation; and little or nothing beyond fragments and scattered sayings—*disjecta membra*—has been preserved of what fell from him on the bench.

A ruffian, wrought up to the verge of madness by drink and temper, was brought before the Court of Chancery for insulting and threatening the officers. The Lord Chancellor addressed him in these words:

'You offer, sir, in your own person, an apt illustration of the legal term *furiosus*, which defines the condition of mind that a man attains by the long and uncontrollable indulgence of a brutal and savage temper, till at length he stands on the narrow isthmus—the thin line of demarcation—which separates the end of ruffianism from the beginning of insanity.'

The most celebrated of his images is that of Time with the hour-glass and the scythe, which he employed to illustrate the effect of the Statute of Limitations. We give what strikes us to be the best among several versions:—

'If Time destroys the evidence of title, the laws have wisely and humanely made length of possession a substitute for that which has been destroyed. He comes with his

scythe in one hand to mow down the immunity of our rights; but, in his other hand, the lawgiver has placed an hour-glass, by which he metes out incessantly those portions of duration which render needless the evidence he has swept away.'

When Plunket, having become a reformer in 1831, was twitted with having been an anti-reformer at an antecedent period, he replied:—

'Circumstances are wholly changed. Formerly Reform came to our door like a felon—a robber to be resisted. He now approaches like a creditor: you admit the justice of his demand, and only dispute the time and instalments by which he shall be paid.'

There is no satisfactory definition of wit. We cannot accept Sydney Smith's, which makes it consist in surprise or unexpectedness, and Barrow's description is too full and discursive to be precise. But Plunket had wit in every sense of the term, from the flash which lights up an argument or intensifies a thought, to the fanciful conceit or comic suggestion which plays round the heartstrings—*circum præcordia ludit*—and aims at nothing higher than to raise a good-humoured laugh.

A very ugly old barrister arguing a point of practice before him, claimed to be received as an authority. 'I am a pretty old practitioner, my lord.' 'An *old* practitioner, Mr. S.'

The treasurer of a party returning from a dinner at the Pigeon House on the Liffey, found he had got a bad shilling, and said he would throw it as far as possible into the water to put it beyond the possibility of circulation. 'Stop,' cried Plunket, 'give it to Toler,'—Lord Norbury was remarkable for penuriousness,—'*he* can make a shilling go farther than any one.'

On Lord Essex saying that he had seen a brother of Sir John Leech, whom he almost mistook for Sir John himself,—so much did the manner[1] run in the family,—

[1] Leech's manner was affected and very peculiar.

Plunket remarked: 'I should as soon have thought of a wooden leg running in the family.'

All the great Irish orators of the last generation were devoted to the Greek and Roman classics. Grattan said of Plunket that 'the fire of his magnificent mind was lighted from ancient altars.' After his retirement from office he visited Rome. On his return, when a new work of merit was recommended as a companion of his journey from London to Ireland, he said he had promised Horace a place in his carriage. 'Surely you have had enough of his company at Rome, where he was your constant companion.' 'Oh, no. I never am tired of him. But then, if he don't go, I have promised the place to Gil Blas.' Curran read Homer once a year, and has been seen rapt up in Horace in the cabin of a Holyhead packet with everybody else sick around him. Lockhart records that, amongst the things to which Sir Walter Scott reverted with the highest admiration after his visit to Ireland in 1825, were the acute logic and brilliant eloquence of Plunket's conversation.

The luminous career of this boast and ornament of his country was destined to close in darkness and gloom. He shared the fate of Marlborough and Swift: his fine intellect became overclouded; and his fame exclusively belonged to history, being, so to speak, a thing of the past, before his death. He died in his ninetieth year, January 5, 1854.

Of the seven eminent men[1] who have held the Great Seal of Ireland since Lord Plunket's compelled retirement, four are still living. Mr. O'Flanagan has consequently thought right to conclude his series with Lord Plunket: and nothing remained for him but to take a pathetic leave of his book, bid it good speed,

[1] Lord Campbell, Lord St. Leonards, the Right Hon. Maziere Brady, the Right Hon. Joseph Napier, the Right Hon. Francis Blackburn, the Right Hon. Abraham Brewster, and Lord O'Hagan.

and commend it to the charitable construction of his readers. This he does much in the manner of Gibbon, who says in his Memoirs that, after writing the last sentence of the 'Decline and Fall' on his terrace at Lausanne, 'a sober melancholy spread over my mind by the idea that I had taken an everlasting leave of an old and agreeable companion, and that, whatever might be the fate of my History, the life of the historian must be short and precarious.' Mr. O'Flanagan's hopes and fears, pleasures and affections, have been similarly bound up in his 'Lives;' which he almost endows with fresh vitality as he parts from them :—

'I cannot part with those who have been my companions for nearly half a lifetime, without deep anxiety as to how they shall be received by the extensive acquaintances to whom I now entrust them, happily under the best possible auspices. . . . . These lives have formed my most agreeable occupation, morning and evening, for a great many years, while my days were passed in the monotony of official routine, in nearly the same labours for twenty years, uncheered by the prospect of promotion; or, if a hope still clung to Pandora's box, it was hitherto doomed to speedy and certain disappointment. As my official duties have been to the best of my ability most *honestly and punctually* discharged, so, I hope, my literary labours partake of the same character; and, however modified by the creed I profess, and the love of country which has grown with my life, I trust a favourable opinion may be entertained of the *way* in which I have written the "Lives of the Lord Chancellors of Ireland."'

Of the *spirit* certainly, although doubts may be entertained of the *way*. Good intentions do not make good writing; and Mr. O'Flanagan is only a fresh instance of the best-natured man with the worst-natured Muse. The Muse of History (her province includes biography) has been decidedly cold to his advances; and, as might have been expected from her

sex, she was not to be won by mere honesty and punctuality; excellent titles (as we hope they will yet practically prove) to official promotion: none whatever to literary fame. An Irishman and a Roman Catholic, he has been constantly treading on dangerous ground; yet his candour and impartiality, his sense of justice and soundness of principle, are without a flaw: we rise from the book with the most favourable impression of the author as an enlightened patriot; and we cordially congratulate him on having done good service to his beloved country by compelling attention to the best specimens of her virtue and genius, her gallantry, eloquence, and wit.

THE SECOND ARMADA.

A CHAPTER OF FUTURE HISTORY.[1]

(From The Times, June, 1871.)

'Thou speak'st a woman's! hear a warrior's wish!
Right from their native land, the stormy North,
May the wind blow till every keel is fixed
Immovable in Caledonia's strand—
Then shall the foe repent their bold invasion,
And roving armies shun the fatal coast.'

Home's *Douglas.*

'Tis the sunset of life gives me mystical lore,
And coming events cast their shadows before.'

Campbell.

SHORTLY after the close of the war between France and Germany in 1871, the English alarmists seemed

[1] I need hardly say that this *jeu-d'esprit* (if it may be so termed) was suggested by 'The Battle of Dorking;' the extraordinary popularity of which (fully admitting its originality and ingenuity) was owing in no slight degree to the existence of a widespread feeling of dissatisfaction and alarm. The author (like the author of 'The Fight at Dame Europa's School') struck a responsive chord. Actuated, no doubt, by the most patriotic motives, he assumed the entire destruction of the British fleet in mid ocean by torpedoes: the unopposed landing of a large army with its equipment: an utter want of preparation on the part of our Government; and the hopeless incapacity (almost amounting to imbecility) of our military chiefs. I maintain the exactly opposite hypothesis; and it is for the calm and impartial reader to judge which was and is the more probable of the two. It is a curious indication of the state of the public mind at the time that a noble lord, indignant at the bare notion of a successful resistance by his countrymen, denounced my 'Chapter of Future History' in the House of Commons as 'feeble and melancholy trash.' 'Feeble,' if you like, my lord; but why 'melancholy?' But pray, Mr. Wild, why B—ch?

As some slight comfort and compensation, a copy was returned to me

unreasonable to an extent that verged on foolishness Never was there a period when, to all outward seeming, an invasion of England was less probable or feasible. France was stricken down and disabled. We had amicably arranged our differences with the United States, and the greatest military nation of the Continent had apparently neither the disposition nor the power to become a formidable assailant of our independence. If ever there was a country whose interests and constitution pointed to a pacific policy, it was United Germany. She required peace to consolidate her empire, and she could not make war without calling the mercantile man from his desk, the professional or literary man from his study, the shopkeeper from his counter, and the agriculturist from the plough.

with these words written across the title-page:—'Well meant: indeed, remarkably so. And so poetical, too! But one little element has been overlooked; to wit—England has repudiated the godly policy of Elizabeth, who, with her people, made a covenant with God against Rome.'

This is not the first time that a popular writer has endeavoured to frighten us for our good, and much in the same manner. Peter Plymley, after enumerating the nations that had been overrun by the French, proceeds:—

'But the English are brave: so were all these nations. You might get together an hundred thousand men individually brave; but without generals capable of commanding such a machine, it would be as useless as a first-rate man-of-war manned by Oxford clergymen or Parisian shopkeepers. I do not say this to the disparagement of English officers: they have no means of acquiring experience: but I do say it to create alarm; for we do not appear to me to be half alarmed enough, or to entertain that sense of our danger which leads to the most obvious means of self-defence. . . . As for the spirit of the peasantry, in making a gallant defence behind hedgerows, and through plate-racks and hencoops, highly as I think of their bravery, I do not know any nation in Europe so likely to be struck with panic as the English; and this from their total unacquaintance with the science of war. Old wheat and beans blazing for twenty miles round; cart mares shot; sows of Lord Somerville's breed running wild over the country; the minister of the parish wounded sorely in his hinder parts; Mrs. Plymley in fits—all these scenes of war an Austrian or a Russian has seen three or four times over; but it is now three centuries since an English pig has fallen in a fair battle upon English ground, or a farmhouse been rifled, or a clergyman's wife been subjected to any other proposals of love than the connubial endearments of her sleek and orthodox mate.'

Then, all-powerful on land, she was powerless on the seas. A contest between her and the maritime population of an island must resemble a contest between a dog and a fish. Neither could quit its proper element for aggressive purposes without imminent risk of discomfiture or destruction. Germany would no more think of sending an armament across the North Sea to invade England, than England would think of landing an army at Hamburg, to advance on Berlin. Nor was the navy of the United States sufficiently strong in seagoing ironclads to cross the Atlantic and encounter the English in their own waters.

So thought and argued the wise men of England in 1871. They thought and argued well, but wise men, however well they argue, will sometimes turn out wrong, and they turned out wrong (we will assume that they did) in this instance—as wrong as the late lamented Cobden when he made the tour of Europe to announce that, for all time to come, Free Trade had rendered war a moral impossibility. Unluckily, mankind are more swayed by their passions, their prejudices, their caprices, and their vanity, than by their well-understood interests. The love of military glory, the lust of conquest, supposed to be confined to the Junker class of Prussia, had proved catching and become the ruling passion of the German nation. Their weaker neighbours were subjugated or annexed: their stronger (Russia amongst the first) found it more prudent to co-operate and cry halves, than resist: England alone indignantly protested against proceedings which recalled the partition of Poland; and so it fell out that, in the year 1874, umbrage having been taken at her tone and attitude, a League, including the most powerful States, was formed for the avowed purpose of reducing the British Isles to the condition of conquered provinces to be divided among the conquerors.

The best mode of invading England had been so

often the subject of competitive examination at the military schools, that an eager desire to test theory by practice was felt by every young officer of promise, and a saying of the greatest of modern strategists had got abroad to the effect that the capture of London, as compared with that of Paris, would be child's play (*Kinderspiel*).[1] The time was opportune; for the long-smouldering hostility of the United States to Great Britain, through a series of untoward accidents, was again kindled into flame. Accordingly, all the shipping of the Baltic, all the naval resources of the League, were put under requisition, and a number of vessels were built especially adapted for the landing of troops, including cavalry and artillery. In particular, a large provision was made of flat-bottomed boats carrying from 100 to 150 men, the sides of which could be let down when they were in shallow water or had been run on shore. A formidable force of men-of-war was to precede the transports and engage any opposing force while the landing was effected, which, it was calculated, could be easily accomplished in six hours. As the Army of Invasion was computed at not less than 100,000 men, the allotted time seemed short to those who had witnessed the landing of the French and English army in the Crimea, which occupied two days, although that army did not exceed 56,000 men, and the landing was unopposed.[2] But the great strategist

[1] Something very like this was certainly said by Count Moltke. He is not a greater strategist than Napoleon, nor has he had more experience of naval expeditions. Is he more likely to form a correct estimate of the possibility of an invasion than Napoleon? He admits, I have heard, that, to create a diversion, one army must be sacrificed at starting. But does he suppose we shall not have ships enough to give an equally good account of the second?

[2] The whole of the cavalry and artillery was not landed till the fourth day. The great difficulty was with the horses. No sailors are handier than the English; and the disembarcation must be effected by sailors. The German soldiers would be probably sea-sick, and certainly helpless for the work.

had pronounced six hours sufficient, and the great strategist could not possibly have miscalculated such a problem.

In recent histories, claiming to be as trustworthy as this, it has been confidently assumed that we thick-skulled islanders would wait quietly to be knocked on the head like the birds called boobies, or caught, like sparrows, by putting salt upon our tails. But although we are constantly running into extremes, although we are by turns profuse from groundless alarm and niggardly from undue confidence, although representative institutions are by no means favourable to the production of good administrators, we are not altogether wanting in an emergency, and we had profited somewhat by the errors of our neighbours in 1870-71. Our army had been placed on a respectable footing in point of numbers: it was well officered under the new system of selection; both Regulars and Irregulars had been supplied with the most improved pattern of breech-loaders: our artillery, as regards quality, was (what Bugeaud said of our infantry) the best in the world: the coast had been carefully surveyed, earthworks thrown up in some places, rifle-pits and trenches dug in others, and railway communication rendered so complete that a large force might be concentrated at the shortest notice on a point.

It need hardly be added that our diplomatic agents were on the alert, or that an enormous armament could not be got together in any quarter of Europe without creating an alarm. In point of fact, our Government were opportunely advised that the invasion was seriously meditated, and that they must be simultaneously on their guard against an American squadron which was to co-operate in a Fenian insurrection of Ireland. The bulk of the English navy was, as usual, scattered abroad, but the Channel Fleet, complete in numbers and equipment, was in the Downs,

and, besides gun-boats, a number of other vessels, drawing little water, had been equipped and put to sea under Rear-Admiral Beauchamp Seymour and Captain Maxse, with orders similar to those issued by Nelson when Napoleon was meditating an invasion from Boulogne:

'Do not throw away your lives uselessly; retreat towards your own shores before an overwhelming force; but if the enemy attempt to land, dash among them at all hazards, and fight on till you sink them or are sunk.'

It was on the evening of June 17, 1874, that the Admiralty received intelligence that an American squadron had been sighted off Milford Haven on its way to the Irish Sea, and my Lords immediately telegraphed to the Commander of the Channel Fleet, Admiral Sir Henry Keppel, to look after them. Three hours afterwards arrived the news that the Armada had been descried, and subsequent reports coming in rapidly left little doubt that the Suffolk coast had been chosen for the landing. The very locality might be inferred with tolerable certainty from its adaptation to the purpose, and from the ascertained fact that Prussian officers, disguised as artists, had been seen sketching it. We also, with all our talk about un-English practices, had not disdained to employ spies. Fouché certainly sent the Duke of Wellington Napoleon's plan of the Waterloo campaign, though it came too late; and it was shrewdly suspected, from the extraordinary foresight shown by the English Government, that there was a Fouché in the military cabinet of the League.

So soon as the course of the headmost ships left no doubt of the precise destination of the expedition, the telegraphs were set to work, and all the available troops were brought down without delay. His Royal Highness, the Commander-in-Chief, was present in person, but the detailed arrangements were left to Lord Strath-

nairn and Lord Sandhurst, assisted by General Wolseley and a well-appointed staff. A couple of hours sufficed to dig in the sand such rifle-pits and trenches as were still wanting; and these were manned with the Guards, the Rifles, a battalion of Marines, and the Inns of Court Volunteers. The rocky and uneven ground behind the beach was occupied by the London Scottish and Queen's Westminster Volunteers, under Lord Elcho, whose dispositions were an improvement on those of Roderick Dhu :—

> '——he waved his hand,
> Down sank the disappearing band.
> Each warrior vanished where he stood,
> In broom or bracken, heath or wood.'

Taking advantage of every inequality of the ground, he placed his men so as to be within easy range of the boats when they should near the shore, and under shelter from the covering fire of the ships.[1] A division, consisting of three regiments of the line, two regiments of militia, the Sherwood Rangers, and two batteries of horse artillery, was kept in reserve under Sir Richard Airey. The rest of the artillery, with the exception of one masked battery, was placed on a mound or eminence out of reach of the ships but commanding a large portion of the beach, and, later in the day, this arm was reinforced by the Norfolk and Suffolk brigades, whose arrival had been delayed by their gallant commander, Sir Alexander Shafto Adair, under an impression that no other than a small subsidiary expedition could or would be landed on that coast.

The cavalry, including the Blues and 2nd Life Guards, under Lieutenant-General Sir James Scarlett, were placed behind the heights on the extreme left, where they could easily reach the shore. In the con-

[1] I was standing with Sir De Lacy Evans at the corner of Pall Mall, when a regiment of volunteers marched by. 'There,' he said, 'ten thousand fellows like those, properly placed, would render the landing of an invading force an impossibility. Nothing could live under their fire.'

tingency of the enemy effecting a landing in force, the cavalry were to charge along the beach, and roll them up before they had time to form. With the cavalry, at the head of his Hussar regiment, rode the heir-apparent to the Throne, irresistibly impelled by the hereditary courage of his race to disobey a Royal mandate (issued from Balmoral) not to leave the capital. Torpedoes were laid down by a flotilla of gun-boats, under Rear-Admiral Sherard Osborne, which withdrew towards Harwich when this duty was performed, prepared to operate on the flank of the Armada when the landing should commence.

It was a time of agitating suspense to the bravest while (about 3 P.M. on the 18th) the ships-of-war were taking up their positions to cover the landing, and the transports were transferring their armed cargoes to the boats. After ascertaining by careful sounding that they could approach no nearer, they opened their fire at about the distance of a mile. The nearest heights were shelled, and the strand was swept with shot and shell, causing little or no loss to the English, who never showed a finger above rifle-pit or trench, till the landing boats intervened and the iron hail necessarily ceased. Then a signal gun was heard: their trumpets rang out: the battery in the centre of their position was unmasked: shells and plunging shot from the mound fell thick and fast among the boats: a line of fire ran along the beach: the rocks and heights were all in a blaze with musketry. The effect was withering; when volley after volley by practised marksmen, each taking an individual aim, poured into boats crowded with men, whose orders were to land and rush to close quarters without firing a shot. And gallantly did they struggle to carry out the programme. Between two and three hundred men, magnificently led, did actually reach dry land and make a rush at the trench held by the Guards, who shot down most of them as they approached, then

sprang up with a shout and, led by Colonel Stephenson, drove the remainder back into the water with the bayonet.

Here occurred one of those incidents which show that modern warfare, with all its mechanical contrivances for wholesale and cold-blooded slaughter, still affords scope for chivalry and romance. An officer of distinguished mien, the scion of a princely house, was pushed to the water's edge, overpowered and exhausted, although still fighting desperately, when his situation was seen by a young lieutenant of the invading navy from a ship's launch in which he had been carrying orders. Without a moment's hesitation, he commanded the crew to pull back, and they obeyed with such a will that within a few seconds the boat was run aground not many yards from their gallant countryman, and they were springing to the rescue, when a ball struck him and he fell. The scene is best described in the glowing language of Byron:

> 'From right to left his path he cleft,
> And almost met the meeting wave—
> His boat appears—not five oars' length—
> His comrades strain with desperate strength—
> Oh, are they yet in time to save?
> Wet, wild, unwearied, to the strand
> They struggle—now they reach the land—
> They come, 'tis but to add to slaughter!
> His life's best blood is on the water.'

The young lieutenant sacrificed his life to his chivalry, and not a man of the heroic boat's crew got away.

Among the many casualties which added to the confusion, one of the largest ironclads ran upon a shoal (like Troubridge's ship at Aboukir) and stuck fast: boats rolled against each other in the swell and got fouled: a shell exploded in that which carried the leader of the headmost division and his staff, killing and wounding most of them; and two transports, carrying artillery and cavalry, ran upon torpedoes and were blown up.

Things began to look very unlike *Kinderspiel.* But large sacrifices had been counted on: it was known and felt that a first landing on the British coast must be effected in the spirit of a forlorn hope, and fresh boats were hurrying in or loading from the transports; when, hark! a low rumbling sound, like intermitting thunder, is heard from far off across the sea. It is the sound of cannon on the extreme left of the Armada. It can be nothing but the English Channel Fleet—and it is! A steamer, putting out from Portsmouth, had overtaken the Admiral, and, despatching a squadron of his ships to watch the Americans, he had come back (like Desaix at Marengo) to give a decisive turn to the wavering fortunes of the day—the day big with the fate of England, of Europe, of the world. He brought with him seven first-class ironclads, with more than twice as many others of heavy metal, and it was a grand and fearful spectacle,—the approach of those magnificent machines, instinct with life and motion, cleaving their way right onward through the thick of the hostile armament, without stopping to engage the ships of war, and running down transport after transport; whilst almost every shot from their enormous guns sent a ship to the bottom, or left a boatload of gallant men struggling for life in the waves. If such a fate is appalling to think of or to contemplate at a safe distance, what must it have been to those who saw and felt that their own turn was coming—who watched with fixed and fascinated gaze the rush of the iron monster that was about to pass crashing over them?

> 'Then rose from sea to sky the wild farewell;
> Then shrieked the timid, and stood still the brave;
> Then some leap'd overboard with dreadful yell,
> As eager to anticipate their grave!
> And the sea yawn'd around them like a hell.'

The military organization of the invading army was beyond all praise: an order emanating from head-

quarters might be said to live along the line, and the skill to restore a losing battle or effect a retreat was never wanting, any more than the strategy which wins or improves a victory. But what did such skill avail here, on an untried element, where soldiers and generals were equally helpless, where strategy was useless and bravery thrown away? All hope of carrying out any pre-organized plan was at an end. *Sauve qui peut* became the word among the hired or pressed masters of transports, who, such of them as escaped being run down, made off without waiting to take in their original freights. The wind rose and soon freshened to a gale. The armed flotillas and gunboats, which had fallen back before the advancing armament, now dashed in and assailed it on every side. The fire of shells was continued from the mound, so long as the light was sufficient to distinguish the hostile vessels. A desperate sea-fight was prolonged till dark, and partially continued through the night.

When morning broke, the catastrophe was made clear in all its horrors. The second Armada had shared the fate of the first. The strand was strewed with wrecks. Every rising wave bore to the surface some ghastly memorial of the battle or the storm. Most of the hostile ironclads were missing, or had struck. The 'Empress Augusta,' which carried Cæsar and his fortunes—in other words, the Imperial Generalissimo and his suite—had received a six-hundred-pound steel-headed shot between wind and water, her engines were disabled, her rudder shot away, and her crew decimated. She struck to the Sultan, commanded by the Duke of Edinburgh, who had engaged her at close quarters, and was preparing to board. Princes, Archdukes, and Dukes (all more or less sea-sick) were made prisoners by the score. The renowned Chief of a brilliant Staff was picked up in an exhausted state while endeavouring to regain his ship by swimming, after the

boat in which he was trying to remedy the confusion had been swamped by the surf; and a Serene Highness, who had valiantly made his way to the shore with a small party, was with difficulty persuaded to give up his sword to Prince Edward of Saxe-Weimar, who enacted the part of Lannoy to Francis I. at Pavia.

Another striking historical parallel was presented, when the Prince of Wales advanced to receive the most illustrious of the prisoners—one whose helmet might have been surmounted by an imperial crown—with the graceful and deferential courtesy with which the Black Prince waited on the captive King of France at Poitiers. But we reserve for another chapter the various episodes of this ever-memorable triumph and its results.

THE PURCHASE SYSTEM.[1]

'Seeing that a true theory is a compendium of particular truths, it is necessarily true as applied to particular cases. The terms of the theory are general and abstract, or the particular truths which the theory implies would not be abbreviated or condensed. But unless it be true in particulars, and therefore true in practice, it has no truth at all.'—Austin, *The Province of Jurisprudence Determined.*

At the risk of being denounced a second time in the House of Commons as the author of 'feeble and melancholy trash,' I will venture to state the main objections to the purchase system which impress civilians like myself. We have as good a right to an opinion on it as Mr. Seely, Mr. Baillie Cochrane, Mr. W. H. Smith, or even Lord Elcho; and I shall show that on every essential point we have the highest military authority on our side.

Shrinking from the perilous doctrine that public employments or trusts of any kind are proper subjects of sale, the advocates of the purchase system content themselves with asserting, in every variety of phrase, that, if indefensible in theory or principle, it works well: that its practical results are excellent: that it has given us an army which, in the words of the Iron Duke, would 'go anywhere and do anything:' that all the recorded triumphs or daring deeds of that army are owing to it: that (in Mr. Baillie Cochrane's opinion) it

[1] The publication of this *brochure*, originally intended for a letter to a leading journal, was accidentally delayed till after the practical decision of the question, and only a few copies were circulated towards the end of July, 1871. It is now reprinted under an impression that the real character and tendency of the purchase system are still imperfectly understood.

is the mainstay of our military system; that (in Lord Elcho's) the purchasing class of officers are 'the salt of the service;' that (according to another senator) our regimental system, which could not exist without it, 'is worthy of the admiration of the world.'

Now, did it ever occur to any of these gentlemen, or to any one of the associate colonels, to analyse their own precise meaning, or to follow out their assertions to the strictly logical and inevitable conclusion? The purchase system, unknown in any other army, is confined to the Guards, the Infantry of the Line, and the Cavalry. It does not exist in the Artillery, the Engineers, the Marines, or the Navy. It should follow, therefore, that, *cæteris paribus*, the officers of the Guards, the Infantry of the Line, and the Cavalry, are superior in all officer-like qualities to the officers of any other branch of either service—indeed, to any other officers in the world: that they are braver, endowed with a higher sense of honour, and better qualified in all respects to inspire the confidence and command the willing obedience of their men. Nay, more: it should follow that if, at a grand review of all our available forces, the Commander-in-Chief were to ride along the line and give the word, 'Over-regulation-price officers to the front,' they would be found to comprise all, or nearly all, who have added or are likely to add lustre to our arms. If this does not follow, what is meant by calling them 'the salt of the service' and 'the mainstay of the military system?' I am not denying their good qualities. I am simply contending that, these qualities having no connection with money, they are not necessarily endowed with more of them than their brother officers who have not purchased, and that, as for bravery, they are not braver than the private who fights for a shilling a day.

By way of testing this point, let us take the cavalry charge at Balaclava, which has been repeatedly men-

tioned in the debates on the Army Regulation Bill as the gem, the pride, the crowning triumph of the purchase system; not without some show of reason, for most of the officers engaged in it had given high prices for their commissions, and their noble leader had paid, sooner or later, about 26,000*l.* for his. Nothing could be finer or more admirable than the manner in which this devoted band rode up that fatal valley to face death; but was there one particle of difference between the bearing of the officers and the men? Did a single trooper draw bridle rein or swerve till the battery was reached? They were like the Scots at Flodden:

> 'No thought was there of craven flight,
> Groom fought like noble, squire like knight,
> As fearlessly and well.'

It may be unjust to question the personal courage of Lord Cardigan. Where he failed was in coolness, presence of mind and military *coup-d'œil*; but it is a fact which cannot and ought not to be kept back that, when this spoilt child of the purchase system, honestly thinking he had done enough for glory, was galloping to the rear, a non-commissioned officer, Sergeant O'Hara, of the 17th Lancers, got a part of his troop together, and, after pursuing the momentary advantage, did a leader's duty in covering the retreat.

The late Lord Alvanley used to say that, after being in one battle, he made up his mind never to be in another, having had to find courage for his men when he had only just enough for himself. He forgot that this was rather too serious a matter for a joke. The British soldier never needs or expects courage to be found for him. He would be simply annoyed by the eternal *en avant* of the French officers; and there is an authentic anecdote of the Peninsular war that, when an aide-de-camp rode to the front of a regiment drawn up to receive cavalry and exhorted them to

stand firm, he was gruffly answered from the ranks, 'Ay, ay, sir, we know our duty.'

It is after describing a scene of disastrous confusion at Albuera for want of a guiding mind in any quarter, that Napier exclaims: 'And then was seen with what a strength and majesty the British soldier fights.' And the same sight may have been seen over and over again during the present century under nearly similar circumstances—*i.e.* when the lack of generalship and professional skill had to be made good by hard fighting. Of what frequent application has been the criticism of the French General on the Balaclava charge: '*C'est magnifique, mais ce n'est pas la guerre.*' How often have British officers merited the peculiar and qualified praise which the American awarded to the bull which he saw taking up a position to charge an express train advancing at full speed: 'I admire your courage, but d—n your discretion.'

Except where the great Duke was present in command, things almost invariably went wrong: as in the Walcheren expedition, the Corunna campaign, and the repulse before New Orleans. To be present was not enough. He was obliged to be omnipresent.

'I certainly feel every day more and more the difficulty of the situation in which I am placed. I am obliged to be everywhere, and, if absent from any operation, something goes wrong.'—(Despatch, May 15, 1811.)

'The ignorance of their duty of the officers of the army who are every day arriving in this country, and the general inattention and disobedience to orders of many of those who have been long here, increase the details of the duty to such an extent as to render it almost impracticable to carry it on; and owing to this disobedience and neglect I can depend upon nothing, however well regulated and ordered.'—(Oct. 13, 1811.)

When he said that the British army would go anywhere and do anything, he was speaking of the Peninsular

army as he left it at the close of the war; and it would be strange if, at the end of several years' active service in the field, an army formed under his eye was not well seasoned for its work.[1] To try the system, we must see what kind of officers it gave us after a long peace at the commencement of a war.

Take the Crimean army as it landed at Eupatoria, or as it took up its cantonments for the winter on the heights before Sebastopol. A more gallant army never existed. The officers of all grades were distinguished by courage of the highest order, by patient endurance, by never-failing readiness to share, if they could not mitigate, the privations of the men. But (not to dwell on the darker shades of the picture) how happens it that no genius for high command, no military mind of the first order, emerged from the crowd of British officers before Sebastopol? There were opportunities enough in all conscience, but those who hope to profit by opportunities, must be prepared for them. Wolfe, who fell in the arms of victory at 34, owed his early distinction (I am not speaking merely of promotion) more to that ardent love of his profession and thorough knowledge of it in which he far surpassed his fellows, than to the bravery in which he could hardly do more than equal them. The modern spirit is unfavourable to the production of a Wolfe.[2]

Before the purchase system can promote bravery, military education, or military proficiency of any kind, the operation of all the ordinary motives which have

[1] 'Do you conceive that the army, when it left France for the Pyrenees, was in as efficient state for service as an army can well be brought to?' 'I always thought I could have gone anywhere and done anything with that army.'—*Evidence on Military Punishments.*

[2] In the autumn of 1855, five or six officers of a regiment just returned from the Crimea and quartered in a neighbouring town, dined at a country house at which I was staying. The conversation happening to turn on military matters, they were asked the meaning of a 'traverse.' Neither of them could tell, and we were obliged to refer to a military dictionary. This certainly was eighteen years since.

hitherto actuated mankind must be reversed. Ordinary men will not be eager to fight or work if they can get all they want without fighting or working. The soldier of Lucullus, who had been robbed of his prize money, fights like a hungry wolf till he has repaired his losses, but then, on being exhorted to attempt a new and desperate adventure, he replies, '*Ibit eo quo vis qui zonam perdidit.*'

Is Colonel Anson prepared to maintain that a soldier with a full purse will fight better than a soldier with an empty one?—that an officer who has lodged his money for the next step is as likely to volunteer on a forlorn hope, or a storming party, as one who (like Gurwood at Ciudad Rodrigo, or Campbell at St. Sebastian) must buy his promotion with his blood? Every French private in the army of the great Napoleon was metaphorically said to carry a marshal's bâton in his knapsack. Would he have perilled his life more fearlessly had he carried the price of a commission in his knapsack? I am not talking of duty, all British officers will do *that*. But would the fact of a man, with a wife and family dependent on him, having invested his fortune in his commission, excite or restrain any undue ardour?

'Some men, with a horror of slaughter,
Improve on the Scripture command,
And honour their wife and their daughter,
That their days may be long in the land.'

Not long since a lieutenant-colonel in command of a regiment, the market value of whose commission exceeded 12,000*l.*, sold out on the declared ground that, having a wife and children, he could not afford to stake so large a sum upon his life. He was an excellent officer, and the service confessedly suffered by the exchange, although no positive objection could be made to his successor; and unless some positive objection can be adduced, these transactions are sanctioned as matter of course by the authorities.

With regard to military education of the higher order, it is not only discouraged by the reflection that promotion may be bought without it, but by the habits and modes of thinking introduced by the purchase system. Mr. W. H. Smith 'thought it an advantage rather than a loss that there should return from time to time into the ranks of English gentlemen officers who, by passing five, six, or ten years in the service of their country, had really qualified themselves more completely for civil life.' Assuming that the Guards' Club or the mess-room is a good preparatory school for the Quarter Sessions or the Union Board, does Mr. W. H. Smith think that the army is improved by a class of officers in a constantly transition state, who *ex vi termini* have no vocation for their calling and no motive for mastering it? Unluckily, being the 'salt of the service,' they give the tone and set the fashion to the rest, and what sort of tone they give may be inferred from the language of their *coryphæus*. 'Salt is good, but if salt has lost his saltness, wherewith will ye season it?' In reference to a gentleman examined before the Royal Commission of 1857, Colonel Anson spoke thus:

'When Mr. Higgins was asked what he thought the feelings of a man would be if he were passed over by selection, he answered that it would lessen the dissatisfaction very much when a man could say to himself, "If I had been industrious and attended to my studies and exercises, I should have been as efficient as my successful brother officer." *A man who could say that deserved to be kicked out of the regiment.*'

If this means anything, it means that, to think of getting on in the army by industry and study, should and would be deemed conduct unbecoming an officer and a gentleman. In the same speech this representative colonel said:—

'It is most necessary for good discipline that an officer should have some pecuniary interest in his com-

mission beyond the wretched pittance he received as pay. If he had not such interest, what control would his superiors have over him? If he chose to disobey an order he would do so and leave the service.'

According to the same unimpeachable authority, the loyalty of the officers mainly rests on the same basis: it is guaranteed by the over-regulation prices paid by them: this is their stake in the country; and let those who deprive them of it take the consequences of their inevitable discontent. On hearing this ominous threat, I bethought me of Curran's answer to Egan when he was boasting that he had a *stake* in the country—'Yes, and a big pikehead to stick on the top of it.'

'Punch' has ironically suggested the expediency of a strike. It is something very like one when an organised agitation is set on foot: when officers threaten to leave the army unless their demands are conceded: when petitions or memorials are simultaneously got up by the thousand: when the bare existence of discontent is held *in terrorem* over the War Office. Nor is there any perceptible difference between the position taken up by the most active of these army agitators and that of the spokesman of the agricultural labourers, except that these have a greater show of reason on their side.

That system can hardly be an elevating one which could bring a loyal, high-minded gentleman to talk like Colonel Anson. Consciously or unconsciously, he assimilates the Queen's army to one of the old feudal armies made up of baronial tenants by knight-service, who were as ready to fight against the Crown as for it, who took the field for a limited period and disbanded when they took offence. If there were no other reason for abolishing purchase, the necessity for rebuking this tone and giving the Queen, or her representatives, the complete uncontrolled disposition of her entire army, would be enough. 'I can recollect the day,' said Sir

Henry Storks, 'when a professionally-educated army was decried as unconstitutional.' He needed not to carry his recollection far back. In the same debate Mr. Osborne objected to having the officers 'Prussianised,'—in other words, properly trained and educated—for fear they should head an onslaught on the House of Commons and repeat Colonel Pride's purge! At all events, then, we shall not be accused of calumniating them when we suggest that their professional education is incomplete. That it is so is their assumed merit and their pride.

Their consequent incapacity for discharging the most important duties was stated in the strongest language by the great Duke:

'Upon this point we ought to consider a little the nature of our officer, and compare him with the Prussian officer. Our officer is a gentleman. . . . . Indeed, we carry this principle of the gentleman, and the objection of intercourse with those under his command, so far, as that, in my opinion, the duty of a subaltern officer, as done in a foreign army, is not done at all in the cavalry, or the British infantry of the line. It is done in the Guards by the sergeants. *Then our gentleman officer, however admirable his conduct in the field, however honourable to himself, however glorious and advantageous to his country, is but a poor creature in disciplining his company,—in camp, quarters, or cantonments.*'—(April 22, 1829.)

Colonel Anson and his friends practically adopt the paradox of Paul-Louis Courier, that a general, like a poet, must be a heaven-born general or no general at all. 'In this great art of commanding armies in war, science comes not little by little, but all at once. The moment one sets about it, one knows from the first all that there is to know. A young prince of eighteen (he is thinking of Condé) arrives from the Court by post, offers battle, wins, and then he is a great captain for life and the greatest captain in the

world.' Napoleon, a greater captain than Condè, did not become a great captain at a bound. He was always reading and day-dreaming about war.

If a regiment or battalion with the rank of lieutenant-colonel can be sold, why not a ship with the rank of commander or post-captain? The lives, characters, comfort and well-being of hundreds of brave men are equally at stake; and it appears to me impossible to contend that money should have anything to do with the nomination to such a trust. Neither should it be determined by mere seniority. It must be done by selection, careful, conscientious selection, under the check of enlightened public opinion, as it is done by the Admiralty at this hour; and there is no imaginable reason why it should not be equally well done at the Horse Guards. No one now gets a ship by money or mere seniority. Why should any one so get a regiment? The non-commissioned officers, especially (as stated by the Duke) in the Guards, are as much the mainstay of our military organisation as their immediate superiors. They are chosen by selection, without dissatisfaction or complaint. They retire in due season, and although no money passes, a succession of able-bodied efficient corporals and sergeants is kept up. Why not of lieutenants and captains? Could not the Commander-in-Chief, with competent advisers, be safely invested with a prerogative analogous to that exercised by every commandant of a battalion without abuse?[1]

Clear-headed men with trained minds have long left off talking of a thing as bad in theory and good in practice. The theory which condemns the purchase system, the theory that no public appointments should

[1] The improved system has now been in operation more than two years; and although a case or two may have been cited to discredit selection for commissions by competitive examination, not a complaint has been raised against the manner in which the discretionary powers vested in the Commander-in-Chief have been exercised.

be the subject of barter, is true in every sense ; although it has only gained general admission by degrees. From the time of Louis Quatorze to the Revolution, judgeships were regularly sold in France, and the practice was defended on the ground that it brought gentlemen and men of independent fortune to the bench of justice. The sale of commissions has been defended on the same ground ; but does it bring gentlemen (*i.e.*, gentlemen by birth and connection) into the service? Is it not nearer the mark to say that it brings rich men and sons of *nouveaux riches?* The Army List favours the impression that plutocracy rather than aristocracy is in the ascendant, especially in the high-priced cavalry regiments. The younger sons of the gentry cannot afford the expensive style of living introduced and fostered by the purchase system. Wealth in a rich country like England is certainly not a better test of gentility than education, and is far from implying either good breeding or good birth.

If money does not ensure gentility, it certainly does not guarantee height, strength, or health. I have seen subalterns who found it difficult to keep step, and mounted heroes, encased in warlike panoply, who resembled Guse Gibbie in 'Old Mortality.' A good system of selection would embrace physical as well as mental or moral requisites ; and I see no reason for an apprehension prevalent amongst the fine ladies (who are all warm advocates of the purchase system) that, under the new order of things, a commission in the Guards might be claimed by an underbred man, five feet nothing, with a hectic cough.

I have already shown how the system operates in inducing good officers to leave the service in their prime. Instances abound in which good officers have been passed over or kept back. The case of Lord Clyde is well known. It was nearly twenty years after he had won the grade of captain by gallantry,

that he was enabled by the kindness of a friend who lent him the money, to purchase his lieutenant-colonelcy. He was wont to say that the debt thus incurred was like a millstone round his neck, and that the fear of dying before discharging it haunted him. Promoted as he should have been, he would probably have succeeded Lord Raglan in the command of the Crimean army, and the conclusion of the campaign would have assumed a totally different aspect.

Havelock was twenty-three years a subaltern, to his ineffable discontent despite his piety, as may be read in his Letters. To turn to the current Army List (July, 1871)—Lieutenant and Adjutant Wright, of the 9th Foot (sixteen years' service) had been purchased over fourteen times. Lieutenant and Adjutant Brownrigg (promoted in April last) had seen sixteen years' service and been purchased over twenty-two times. Captain Scotland, of the Chester Yeomanry, who was Lieutenant and Adjutant of the 7th Dragoons in March, 1870, had been twenty-five years in the service, fifteen years Lieutenant and Adjutant of the same regiment, and had seen seventeen officers pass over his head, all of whom he had instructed. No subaltern could be kept back so long in a non-purchase corps. The Lieutenant of Artillery who heads the list of Lieutenants of Artillery in the 'Army List,' has been a Lieutenant thirteen years: the senior Lieutenant of Royal Engineers rather more than thirteen years. These periods include their entire service.

Adjutants are selected for knowledge and ability, and the three cases I have specified among many fully illustrate the working of the purchase system: they show that it is sheer accident who is floated or stranded by it: that efficiency and inefficiency are no more considered than if the matter were decided by a toss up. A good system should be uniform in its action. Instead of aiming at rapidity of circulation, it should

try to retain all officers of approved merit, promote them in due course, and afford no facilities for retirement except to the incapable or over-aged, as regards whom retirement should be compulsory.

If the grand or sole object were the infusion of young blood, we had better revert to the practice of giving commissions to boys in their cradles who grew to colonels in their teens, or to that pursued with Edward Waverley, who joined his regiment as captain in command of a troop, 'the intermediate steps being overleapt with great agility.' A high Irish official procured a cornetcy of horse for his daughter; who drew the pay and appeared at a fancy ball in the uniform. The short jacket and tight pantaloons set off her figure to advantage; and noble lords and honourable colonels were never more zealous in maintaining that the system on the whole worked well.[1]

The worst of it was that old subalterns without money or interest were left out in the cold. There were so many of them, they formed so marked a feature of our society, that one or more figure in every popular novel of the period.

Lieutenant Lefevre, who had served two or three campaigns with Uncle Toby in Flanders, must have been of respectable standing in the service when he died, leaving as available assets, in Uncle Toby's hands, in trust for his son, an old regimental coat and sword.

Lieutenant Lismahago, in 'Humphrey Clinker,' had

[1] Lady Aldborough walked up to her, and said: 'Well, my dear, though you are a young soldier, you have already shown plenty of *bottom*.' Charles Phillips (*Curran and his Contemporaries*, third edit. p. 45) says that one of Provost Hutchinson's daughters was gazetted for a majority of horse. Lord Townshend, when Lord Lieutenant, said of this Provost: 'If I gave Hutchinson England and Ireland for an estate, he would beg to have the Isle of Man for a potato garden.' There is a scene in Lady Morgan's novel, 'The O'Briens and O'Flahertys,' where the Irish Cabinet, having nothing else vacant, agree to give one of their female adherents a cornetcy *en attendant*

been thirty years in the service, 'wounded, maimed, and mutilated,' without ever attaining a higher rank than that of lieutenant. 'But in such a length of time,' resumed the Squire, 'you must have seen a great many young officers put over your head?' 'Nevertheless,' said he, 'I have no cause to murmur. They bought their preferment with their money. I had no money to carry to market: that was my misfortune, but nobody was to blame.' Here was a veteran after Colonel Anson's own heart.

The lieutenant with whom Tom Jones enlisted was nearly 60 years of age. 'He had served as an ensign at the battle of Tannières, where he had received two wounds, and so well distinguished himself that he was by the Duke of Marlborough advanced to be a lieutenant immediately after that battle. In this commission he had continued ever since, viz. nearly 40 years, during which time he had seen vast numbers preferred over his head, and had now the mortification to be commanded by boys whose fathers were at nurse when he first entered the service.' This case has points in common with Lord Clyde's.

The author of 'Waverley' brings us familiarly acquainted with Captain Doolittle and Captain M'Turk. A disrespectful reference by the author of 'Pelham' to the manners of Majors of the Line, caused him to be pelted with letters from Majors of the Line in the newspapers for a month. With the simplicity of the servant-girl who asked what was done with the old moons, I asked the other day what had been done with the old Majors, and was informed that a practice had grown up of breveting them into Colonels and Major-Generals, although without a corresponding increase of pay; so that neglected merit and an ungrateful country are still not unfrequently their theme. This estimable class have been the principal sufferers from the purchase system. When, therefore, Colonel Anson pronounces

it advantageous to non-purchasing officers, and speculates on their melancholy destiny when it shall be no more, the mental process he undergoes must be identical with that of the old Scotch lady, mentioned by Dean Ramsay, who, on hearing that sperm oil was about to be superseded by gas, pathetically exclaimed, 'Gude guide us, what is to become of the puir whales?'

When it was suggested by Mr. Vernon Harcourt in debate, that promotion went on tolerably well in the Foreign Office, although it was not the practice for the head clerk to buy out the under-secretary,[1] Colonel Anson made answer that officers in the army, who had to serve in all climates, should be young men with good constitutions, and that, without the purchase system, they would stagnate and grow old. But why would they, any more than the men of the London police, or the Irish constabulary, or any other branch of the public service for which health and strength are indispensable? Or what is there to prevent the flow of promotion from being maintained at its present rate, besides being more equable? It simply comes to this, that, if you require an expensive article, you must pay for it: if you will have no officers in active service beyond a given age, you will have a greater number to keep on pensions or half-pay.

At the same time, you may comfort yourself with the conviction that nothing is so costly as inefficiency. The late Sir George Cornewall Lewis estimated the cost of the Crimean War at ninety millions sterling If all branches of the service, civil and military, had been thoroughly effective, one-half of this enormous sum might have been saved. If we have suffered abuses to grow up, it is useless to repine at the cost,

[1] Exchanges may be illustrated in the same manner. What would be thought if a captain in the navy on a foreign station were to insist on his right to exchange with a captain in the navy on a home station, or a clerk in the Admiralty with a clerk in the Custom House?

however heavy, of suppressing them. We paid twenty millions to emancipate our slaves. We may have to pay half as much to emancipate our Horse Guards and War Office. But no amount of money will be grudged by the country to promote the complete efficiency of the army; for it is felt on all hands that the national honour, independence, safety and tranquillity are at stake.

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